

**Wú Mén Guān**

**無門關**

**The Barrier That Has No Gate**

Original Collection in Chinese by

**Chán Master Wúmén Huìkāi**  
**無門慧開 (1183-1260)**

Questions and Additional Comments by

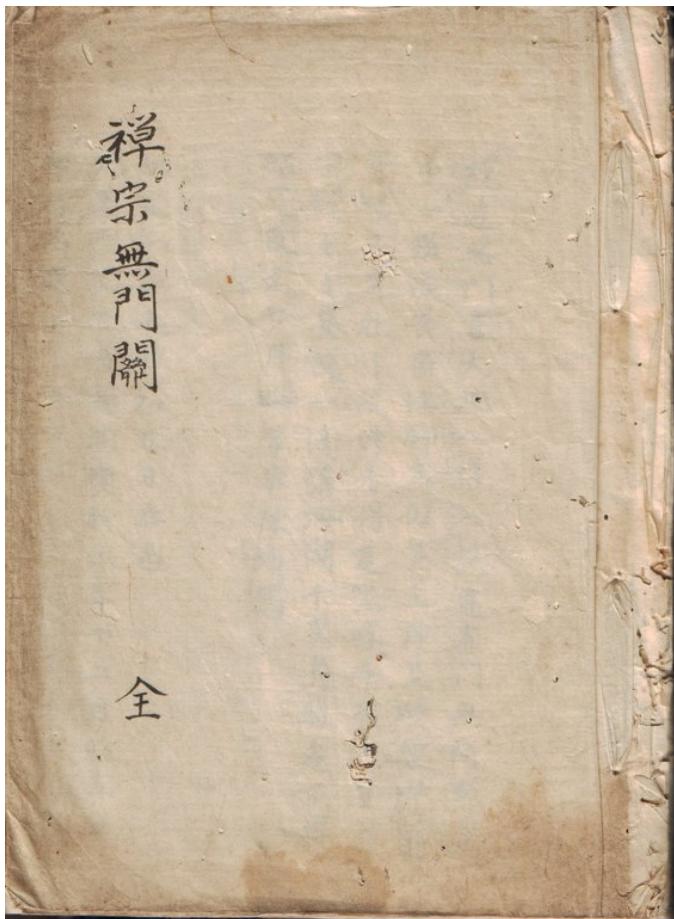
**Sōn Master Sǔngan**

Compiled and Edited by

**Paul Dōch’ōng Lynch, JDPSN**



## Frontspiece



**“Wú Mén Guān”**  
Facsimile of the Original Cover



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## **Dedication**

What are we in this cosmos? This ineffable question has haunted us since Buddha sat under the Bodhi Tree. I would like to gracefully thank the author, Chán Master Wúmén, for his grace and kindness by leaving us these wonderful teachings. I would also like to thank Chán Master Dàhuì for his ineptness in destroying all copies of this book; thankfully, Master Dàhuì missed a few so that now we can explore the teachings of his teacher.



## Foreword

There is considerable underlying confusion for Western Zen students who begin to study the tremendous wealth of Asian knowledge that has been translated into English from China, Korea, Vietnam and Japan over the last seventy years. In most large bookstores, there is a section reserved for books on Buddhism, or if the store is smaller it might be Eastern Philosophy, and on those shelves, there will be found literally hundreds of titles from various sources and authors. A Zen aspirant browsing through the brightly bound covers may find an interesting book such as **The Recorded Sayings of Zen Master Jōshū**<sup>i</sup> on the shelf; however, if that Zen aspirant starts to leaf through the contents, he or she will discover that the author actually refers to the book's subject, Zen Master Jōshū, as Zen Master Chao-chou within the contents of his book. The aspirant may then start leafing through another book, say **The Compass of Zen**<sup>ii</sup>, only to discover that Zen Master Jōshū in the last book is referred to as Zen Master Joju in this book. The next text might be the **Book of Serenity—One Hundred Zen Dialogues**<sup>iii</sup> in which the aspirant will find more stories about the same teacher, only this time his name is Romanized as Zhàozhōu.

We now have only leafed through the contents of three books and are left with four Romanization's for one single Zen Master's name, which are Jōshū, Chao-chou, Joju and Zhàozhōu. If the aspirant then begins to read more books that refer to the hundreds of other Asian teachers the complexity of keeping all of this straight going from book to book can be at times overwhelming. The Japanese Teachers who came to the west were literally using the Japanese way of pronouncing Chinese logographs for a particular person, place or thing. Furthermore, the Korean Teachers who came to the West were using their Korean way of pronunciation. Although originally not a problem because there were so few books on the subject when they arrived, the cultures that were created

by the founding Asian teachers have yet to find a common English voice.

Jôshû is the Japanese Romanization of the characters 趙州從諗. Joju is the Korean Romanization invented within the Kwan Um School of Zen<sup>iv</sup> and indirectly from Zen Master Sŭngsan<sup>v</sup> (Seung Sahn); however, the student may also encounter different Romanizations from other Korean sources. Chao-chou is the older Wade–Giles<sup>vi</sup> method for Romanization of the Chinese logographs, while Zhàozhōu is the newer Pinyin method of Romanization for the same logographs.

Prior to China opening its borders to the west in 1979 the principal form of Chinese Romanization was the Wade–Giles method, although the curious Zen aspirant will eventually come across even older works that might employ the Yale system in lieu of the other two aforementioned methods. The Pinyin<sup>vii</sup> Romanization method appeared when the People's Republic of China adopted its own system in 1979 and all official Chinese uses of Romanization now employ the Pinyin method; furthermore, this standard is becoming more popular as China's influence in the world increases.

Prior to 1979, the capital of China was popularly known as Peking; today the entire world refers to the capitol of China as Beijing. Another problem with the Wade–Giles versus Pinyin debate shows up when one visits a Chinese Restaurant. I have yet to find a Restaurant in the West that serves Beijing duck; this unique dish is still referred to as Peking duck at most Chinese restaurants. On the many trips, that I have made to China each place that I visited utilized the Pinyin method for maps, signs, menus, newspapers, etc.

Yet, another determining factor for choosing a methodology of Romanization is the advent of new computer software programs. Microsoft Word 2003/2007 now has numerous language functions that will transliterate Romanized Pinyin into Unicode Chinese logographs as well

as almost every other language/alphabet in the world. Google and Google Translate have internet sites that will also make rough attempts at translating other web sites, paragraphs and words from one language to another. Following the advent of uni-code, along with its two-byte segments, and the sequential upgrade of the world's databases, the rendering of Chinese, Korean and Japanese logographs has become easier than ever.

The Korean government has tried to take the cue put forth by the Chinese by adopting an official Romanization methodology for Korean; however, major changes, additions and deletions have taken place over the last twenty-five years. Furthermore, each of the officially sanctioned systems themselves have been totally replaced several times in that same existing time frame. There is conscientious debate about the proper use of western characters in the pronunciation of Hangul and many scholars still disagree with all of the methods put forth to date. I consulted several of the most renowned Western Scholars of Korean Buddhism and have chosen, as they have, to employ the McCune-Reishauer<sup>viii</sup> system to Romanize Korean names. This does not follow the methods used by the Kwan Um School of Zen, of which we share the same root teacher; but their methodology does not conform to any system used by any other group in the world. Their Romanization system appears to have been invented and has evolved over time internally by members with no formal language training within the organization. It might also be noted that the Jögye Order of Buddhism, which is the largest single Buddhist Order in Korea has recently adopted the current Korean Government's method of transliteration. The problem is that the method utilizes stringing multiple vowels together in an effort to emulate certain sounds that totally do not exist in the Western Latin languages.

Based upon all of this information, where does this leave us in this discussion? I have decided to utilize the

Romanization of a person or place based upon the country of origin. Additionally, as Pinyin has begun to circumvent the use of the Wade–Giles and Yale methods we have decided to use Pinyin for Chinese Romanization. I hope that other authors and information databases will eventually follow this method making it easier on the beginning Students of Zen. A final note of the Romanizations utilized within this book. Because of the ease of use of our new uni-code databases and fonts, I have chosen to employ the use of diacritical marks, and I have chosen to render common Sanskrit names, terms and places utilizing their technical forms. The reason is that the proper pronunciation of these words is not intuitively obvious to the unseasoned reader, so additionally I have included a pronunciation chart in the index section of this book. Lastly, I want to state that any mistakes or omissions made within this text are purely my own.

Paul Lynch, JDPSN  
*Five Mountain Order*  
Huntington Beach, CA 2008

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## About Chán Master Wúmén Huìkāi

Wúmén Huìkāi (無門慧開) was a thirteenth century Chan Master who was abbot at Lóngxiáng-sì in China, wrote the Zen classic Wú Mén Guān, which contains forty-eight now-famous Zen kōans and was first published in 1228. The Barrier That Has No Gate (無門關, Japanese: Mumonkan) is a collection of forty-eight Chán (Zen) kōans compiled in the early Thirteenth Century by Chinese monk Wúmén. Wúmén's preface indicates that the volume was published in 1228 ACE. Each kōan has a commentary and a gatha by Wúmén.

Along with the Biyán Lu (碧巖錄 Blue Cliff Record) and the oral tradition of Hakuin Ekaku<sup>9</sup> (白隱 慧鶴, 1686 – 1769), The No Entry Point Gate is a central work much used in the Línjì School. Five of the kōans in the work concern the sayings and doings of Zhàozhōu; four concern Yúnémén.

Although the title The Gateless Gate has become common in English, some have criticized this translation as unfaithful to the original. A particular source of criticism is the fact that, in “Gateless Gate”, the word “gate”, occurs twice, implying an obviously paradoxical meaning: a gate without a gate. On the contrary, the two Chinese characters being translated here are 門 (mén) and 關 (guān), which are different words and usually have distinct meanings. In order to more accurately reflect this, the translations The Gateless Passage or The Gateless Barrier are sometimes used.

The character 無 (wú) has a straightforward meaning: no or nothing. 門 (mén) is a very common character meaning door or gate. In modern Chinese, 關 (guān) is most often a

verb meaning to close, but it also functions as a noun with the meaning of checkpoint, such as a customs house or a fortress guarding a mountain pass. This implies the literal translation checkpoint without a gate. As a checkpoint is something that can be either closed, functioning as a barrier, or open, functioning as an entry point, this title may be taken to have a double meaning: does “without a gate” mean that the barrier has no gateway through which to pass, or does it mean that the passage has no gate to block it?

One should also note that, as the author of the collection was named Wúmén (which literally means gateless), Wúménguān could also be read as simply, the Checkpoint of Wúmén.

## Chán Master Wúmén's Preface

佛語心爲宗、無門爲法門。

Buddhism points mind as its foundation and a barrier that has no-gate as its entry point;

既是無門、且作麼生透。

yet, how do you pass through this barrier that has no-gate?

豈不見道、從門入者不是家珍、

從緣得者始終成壞。

An ancient once said that the things passing through this gate could never be your own treasures. Whatever you gain from external circumstances are extinguished in the end.

恁麼說話、大似無風起浪好肉抉瘡。

However, this is already raising waves where there is no wind. It is like cutting unblemished skin.

何況滯言句覓解會。掉棒打月、隔靴爬痒、有甚交涉。

As for those who try to understand this essence through other people's words, they are striking at the moon with a stick; they are scratching the sole of their shoe, when it is their foot that itches. What do they understand of the truth?

慧開、紹定戊子夏、首衆于東嘉龍翔。因納子請益、遂

將古公案作敲門瓦子、隨機引導學者。

In the summer of the first year of Huìkāi, was in Lóngxiáng-sì and as the head monk there worked with the student monks, using the cases of the ancient Masters as clubs to batter at the gate and lead them on according to their respective capacities.

竟爾抄錄、不覺成集。初不以前後敍列、

共成四十八則。

The text was written down in no important order, but just assembled to make a collection of forty-eight cases.

**通曰無門關。**

This collection is titled the Wú Mén Guān, “The Barrier That Has No Gate.”

**若是箇漢、不顧危亡單刀直入。**

A noble man of determination will unhesitatingly push his way straight forward, regardless of what dangers are on the path.

**八臂那咤、擋他不在。**

Then even the eight-armed Nàzhà cannot hinder him.

**縱使西天四七、東土二三、只得望風乞命。**

Even the four sevens of the West and the two threes of the East would beg for their lives.

**設或躊躇、也似隔窓看馬騎、貶得眼來、早已蹉過。**

If one has no determination, then it will be like catching a glimpse of a horse galloping past the window: in the twinkling of an eye, it will be gone.

### **頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse**

**大道無門**

The Great Way is gateless,

**千差有路**

Approached in a thousand ways.

**透得此關**

Once through this checkpoint

**乾坤獨步**

You walk unhindered in this universe.

**无门慧开**

## 一 趙州狗子

### Case 1: Zhàozhōu's “Wu”

趙州和尚、因僧問、狗子還有佛性也無。州云無。

A monk asked Chán Master Zhàozhōu<sup>i</sup>, “Does even a dog have Buddha–Nature?” Master Zhàozhōu answered, “Wú.<sup>ii</sup>,” (No!)

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、參禪須透祖師關、妙悟要窮心路絕。

To study Zen you must pass through the barrier of the ancient masters; to attain the subtle realization, you must completely cut off your mental constructs.

祖關不透心路不絕、盡是依草附木精靈。

If you do not pass through the barrier of the ancient masters, and do not cut off your mental constructs, then objects will lead around your consciousness as they appear.

且道、如何是祖師關。

So, please tell me, what is the barrier of the ancient masters?

只者一箇無字、乃宗門一關也。

The single word no (wú) is the lock on the gate of the source; 遂目之曰禪宗無門關。

therefore it is called the “The barrier of Zen that has no gate.”

透得過者、非但親見趙州、便可與歷代祖師把手共行、

眉毛廝結同一眼見、同一耳聞。

---

<sup>i</sup> Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn (778-897) 趙州從諗 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [Jap]: Jôshû Jûshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn

<sup>ii</sup> This Kôan first appeared in the West as Jôshû’s Mu, which is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese Logograph (無) which is pronounced Wu in the original Chinese.

Those who can pass through this barrier will not only see Zhàozhōu face to face, but they will also enter into the realm of all the Zen Masters who ever were, entangling your eyebrows with theirs, seeing with the same eyes, and hearing with the same ears.

豈不慶快。

Isn't that a delightful prospect?

莫有要透關底麼。

Wouldn't you like to pass this barrier?

將三百六十骨節、八萬四千毫竅、通身起箇疑團參箇無字。

Arouse your entire body with its three hundred and sixty bones and joints and its eighty-four thousand pores of the skin; summon up a spirit of great doubt and concentrate on this word "wú."

晝夜提撕、莫作虛無會、莫作有無會。

Carry it continuously day and night. Do not form a nihilistic conception of vacancy, or a relative conception of "has" or "has not."

如吞了箇熱鐵丸相似、吐又吐不出。

It will be just as if you swallow a red-hot iron ball, which you cannot spit out even if you try.

蕩盡從 前惡知惡覺、久久純熟自然內外打成一片、如啞子得夢、只許自知。

All the illusory ideas and delusive thoughts accumulated up to the present will be exterminated, and when the time comes, internal and external will be spontaneously united. You will know this, but for yourself only, like a dumb man who has had a dream.

驟然打發、驚天 動地。

Then all of a sudden, an explosive conversion will occur, and you will astonish the heavens and shake the earth.

如奪得關將軍大刀入手、逢佛殺佛、逢祖殺祖、於生死岸頭得大自在、向六道四生中遊戲三昧。

It will be as if you snatch away a great warrior's sword and hold it in your hand. Meeting the Buddhas, you kill the Buddhas; meeting Chán Masters, you kill Chán Masters. On the brink of life and death, you command perfect freedom; among the six fold worlds and four modes of existence, you enjoy a merry and playful samadhi.

且作麼生提撕。

Now, I want to ask you again, "How will you carry it out?"  
盡平生氣力舉箇無字。

Employ every ounce of your energy to work on this "Wú."  
若不間斷、好似法燭一點便著。

If you hold on without interruption, behold; a single spark and the holy candle is illuminated!

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

狗子佛性

a dog's Buddha-Nature,

全提正令

only go straight ahead.

纔涉有無

if you touch "yes" or "no",

喪身失命

you lose your life.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The first question is; Buddha said all things have Buddha nature. Nature means substance. All

things have this substance. However, Zhàozhōu said the dog had no Buddha nature. Which one is correct?

The second question is; Zhàozhōu said “Wu.” What does “Wu” mean? The third question is; does a dog have Buddha nature? What can you do?

Many students understand this kōan; however, understanding cannot help you. You must attain the correct function of freedom from life and death—only understanding freedom from life and death cannot help you.

1. *Buddha said all things have Buddha nature. Nature means substance. All things have this substance. However, Zhàozhōu said a dog had no Buddha nature. Which one of these statements is correct?*
2. *Zhàozhōu said, “Wu.” What does this mean?*
3. *I ask you, does a dog have Buddha-nature?*
4. *Zhàozhōu said the dog had no Buddha nature and this has caused suffering now since the ninth century and that is more than twelve hundred years of suffering because of Zhàozhōu’s answer. So, how do you fix Zhàozhōu’s mistake?*

## 二 百丈野狐

### Case 2: Báizhàng's Fox

百丈和尚、凡參次、有一老人常隨衆聽法。

While Chán Master Báizhàng<sup>i</sup> was giving a certain series of dharma talks, an old man always followed the monks to the main hall and listened to him.

衆人退、老人亦退。

When the monks left the hall, the old man would also leave.

忽一日不退。師遂問、面前立者復是何人。

One day, however, he stayed behind, and Master Báizhàng asked him, “Who are you, standing here before me?”

老人云、諾。

The old man replied.

某甲非人也。

“I am not a human being.

於過去迦葉佛時曾住此山。

In the distant past, in the time of Kàsyapa Buddha<sup>ii</sup>, I was the Master, living here on this mountain.

因學人問、大修行底人還落因果也無。

One day a student asked me, ‘does an enlightened person fall into samsara (the realm of cause and effect?)’

某甲對云、不落因果。

I answered, ‘No, they are not subject to cause and effect.’

---

<sup>i</sup> Báizhàng Huáihái (720-814) 百丈懷海 [wg]: Pai-chang Huai-hai; [Jap]: Hyakujō Ekai was a Chinese Chán Master during the Tang Dynasty. He is a dharma heir of Mǎzǔ Dàoyī. Báizhàng’s students included Huángbò and Línjī

<sup>ii</sup> In Buddhist tradition, Kàsyapa (迦葉佛) is the name of a Buddha, the third of the five Buddhas of the present kalpa (the Bhaddakappa or 'Fortunate Kalpa'), and the sixth of the six Buddhas prior to the historical Buddha mentioned in the earlier parts of the Pali Canon (D.ii.7). In the Buddhist texts in Sanskrit, this Buddha is known as Kāśyapa.

**五百生墮野狐身。**

Because of this answer, I have been reborn as a fox<sup>i</sup> for five hundred generations.

**今請、和尚代一轉語貴脫野狐。**

I implore you now to give a turning word and release me from this foxes body.”

**遂問、大修行底人、還落因果也無。**

Finally, the old monk asked Báizhàng “Does an enlightened man fall into the realm of cause and effect?”

**師云、不昧因果。**

Báizhàng answered, “Cause and effect are clear.”

**老人於言下大悟。**

No sooner had the old man heard these words than he was enlightened.

**作禮云、某甲、已脫野狐身住在山後。**

The old monk immediately attained enlightenment and while making his bows, said, “I am now free of this fox’s body which can be found in a cave on the other side of this mountain.”

**敢告和尚。乞、依亡僧事例。**

“I have a favor to ask of you: would you please bury my body as that of a dead monk.”

**師、令維那白槌告衆、食後送亡僧。**

Báizhàng had the temple director strike the gavel and announce to the assembly that after the midday meal there would be a funeral service for a dead monk.

**大眾言議、一衆皆安、涅槃堂又無人病。何故如是。**

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<sup>i</sup> The story deals with cause and effect (karma in Buddhism), the power of language, reincarnation, and the folklore elements involved the role of the fox in Chinese mythology. The fox is representative of the Western image of a ‘black cat’ or perhaps a witch or sorcerer. They are considered sly and sneaky and also represent bad omens for the common population.

The monks wondered aloud, “Everyone is in good health; nobody is in the sick ward. What does this mean?”

食後只見師領衆至山後岳下、以杖挑出一死野狐、乃依火葬。

After the meal Báizhàng led the monks to a cave on the far side of the mountain, with his staff poked out the dead body of a fox, and performed the ceremony of cremation.

師、至晚上堂、舉前因緣。

That evening he ascended the rostrum and told the monks the whole story.

黃蘖便問、古人錯祇對一轉語、墮五百生野狐身、轉轉  
不錯合作箇甚麼。

Huángbò Xīyùn<sup>i</sup> thereupon asked him, “This old monk made one word mistake and was doomed to be a fox for five hundred generations. Suppose he had given the right answer, what would have happened then?”

師云、近前來與伊道。

Master Báizhàng said, “Come closer here to me, and I will tell you.”

黃蘖遂近前、與師一掌。

Reverend Huángbò went up to Chán Master Báizhàng and slapped him across the face.

師拍手笑云、將謂、胡鬚赤。更有赤鬚胡。

Venerable Báizhàng clapped his hands with a laugh and exclaimed, “I thought that the barbarian had a red beard but now I see that the barbarian’s beard is red.<sup>ii</sup>”

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<sup>i</sup> Huángbò Xīyùn (died 850) 黃蘖希運 [wg]: Huang-po Hsi-yün; [Jap]: Ōbaku Kiun was an influential Chinese master of Zen Buddhism. He was born in Fujian, China in the Tang Dynasty. Huángbò was a disciple of Báizhàng Huáihái (720-840) and the teacher of Línjí Yíxuán (died 866)

<sup>ii</sup> This statement is referring to Bodhidharma who is always pictured as having a beard.

## Master Wúmén's Comment

無門曰、不落因果、爲甚墮野狐。

Not falling under causation: how could this make the monk a fox?

不昧因果、爲甚脫野狐。

Not ignoring causation: how could this make the old man emancipated?

若向者裏著得一隻眼、便知得前百丈贏得風流五百生。

If you come to understand this, you will realize how old Báizhàng would have enjoyed five hundred rebirths as a fox.

## 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

不落不昧

not falling, nor darkening:

兩采一賽

two faces of the same coin.

不昧不落

not darkening, nor falling:

千錯萬錯

ten thousand errors, a million mistakes.

**Seung Sahn's Commentary:** This story is very interesting; however, Báizhàng's speech is not correct. He said, "Cause and effect are clear," but how could the fox lose his fox's body and get Enlightenment upon hearing these words?

I have a big question: does it mean additionally that everyone will lose their human body when they get Enlightenment? If this is so, they will become what kind of being, a God, a Buddha, or what? Not darkening, not falling; a thousand mistakes, ten thousand mistakes.

1. *The first question is, “Not falling, not darkening.” Are they the same or different?*
2. *Why did Huángbò hit his teacher (Báizhàng)?*
3. *Huángbò hit Báizhàng and then laughed and said, “I thought that the barbarian had a red beard but now I see that the barbarian’s beard is red.” What does this mean?*
4. *Báizhàng’s speech is not correct. He said, “Cause and effect are clear,” but how could the fox lose his fox’s body and get Enlightenment upon hearing these words?*

### 三 俱胝堅指

#### Case 3. Jùzhī Yīzhǐ Raises a Finger

俱胝和尚、凡有詰問、唯舉一指。

Whenever Chán Master Jùzhī<sup>i</sup> was questioned about Chán, he would simply hold up one finger.

後有童子。因外人問、和尚說何法要。

Once a visitor to the temple could not find the master so he asked Jùzhī’s attendant, who was a young boy, “What dharma does your master teach?”

童子亦堅指頭。

The attendant, mimicking his master, mindlessly held up one finger.

<sup>i</sup> Jùzhī Yīzhǐ 俱胝一指 [Kor]: Guji [Jap]: Gutei Isshi was a 9th-century Chinese Chán Master. After Bodhidharma, he was the eleventh successor in the line of Nánnyuè Huáiràng (677–744) and Mǎzū Dàoyī (709–788), as well as—according to some sources—Linjī Yíxuán (although according to others he was Linjī’s contemporary). He was the student of Hángzhōu Tiānlóng

**祇聞遂以刃斷其指。**

Upon seeing this, Jùzhī cut off the attendant's finger with his precepts knife.

**童子、負痛號哭而去。**

As the boy ran away screaming with pain.

**祇復召之。童子廻首。祇却 堅起指。**

Chán Master Jùzhī called to him, and when the boy turned his head, the Master held up his finger.

**童子忽然領悟。**

The attendant was suddenly enlightened.

**祇將順世、謂衆曰、吾得天龍一指頭禪、一生受用不盡。**

When Jùzhī was about to die, he said to his assembled monks, "I obtained this one-finger Chán from Venerable Master Tiānlóng<sup>i</sup> and have used it all my life but still I did not exhaust it."

**言訖示滅。**

When he had finished saying this, he died.

### **Master Wúmén's Comment**

**無門曰、俱祇並童子悟處、不在指頭上。**

The enlightenment of Chán Master Jùzhī and of the boy does not depend on the finger.

**若向者裏見得、天龍同俱祇並童子興自己一串穿却。**

If you understand this, Venerable Tiānlóng, Jùzhī, the boy, and you yourself are all run through with one skewer.

### **頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse**

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<sup>i</sup> Hángzhōu Tiānlóng [wg]: Hang-chou T'ien-lung, [Jap]: Kashō Tenryū, (d. 9th century), heir of Dàmèi Fǎcháng, Nányuè line

俱胝鈍置老天龍

Jùzhī made a fool of old Master Tiānlóng,

利刃單提勘小童

a sharp precepts knife has damaged the boy,

巨靈擅手無多子

the mountain spirit raised his hand without effort

分破華山千万重

a great mountain range of ten thousand peaks is split in two.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The snake has legs and puts on socks. Who can control this snake? If you have no fingers, you can control it.

1. *What is the meaning of Jùzhī's raising one finger?*
2. *What did the boy attain?*
3. *If you were the attendant, what could you say to Zen Master Jùzhī?*

## 四 胡子無鬚

### Case 4. Bodhidharma has no Beard

或庵曰、西天胡子、因甚無鬚。

Chán Master Huòān<sup>i</sup> said, “Why does Master Bodhidharma<sup>ii</sup> have no beard?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、參須實參、悟須實悟。

Study should be real study, enlightenment should be real enlightenment.

者箇胡子、直須親見一回始得。

You should meet this barbarian’s heart at least once to be fully intimate with him.

說親見、早成兩箇。

But saying you are fully intimate already divides you into two.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

癡人面前

in front of an old fool

不可說夢

don’t speak of dreams

胡子鬚無

Bodhidharma with no beard

惺惺添

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<sup>i</sup> Huòān Shítí (1108-1179) 或菴師體 [wg]: Huo-an Shih-t'i, [Kor]: Hökam, [Jap]: Wakuan Shitai

<sup>ii</sup> Bodhidharma (d: 536) 達磨 [py]: Dámó, [wg]: Ta-mo, [Kor]: Talma, [Jap]: Datsuma, he is considered Twenty-Eighth in the Indian Lineage from Śakyamuni, and the First Chinese Ancestor.

this obscures what is already clear.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Why does Bodhidharma have no beard? This is a dharma exchange kōan. Here is an example: there is a very famous painter, and everybody wants him to draw his or her face. They will pay him much money to do this. “Please, will you draw my face? Make a picture of me?”

So he makes a portrait of you, and when he is finished with it, there is your finished portrait. Look at that! No hair! It is like a monk! You are very surprised. Why no hair? So what can you do? Already you have paid much money, and he is a famous painter! Maybe there is some meaning! Then what do you ask him?

In this way, Bodhidharma has a beard. Then why does Huòān Zen Master ask, “Why does Bodhidharma have no beard?”

That, we say, is a dharma exchange kōan. There are many kinds of dharma exchange kōans. Another example is this: you clean your body in the Zen Center shower room.

However, where do you clean your mind? Where do the sun, the moon, and the stars come from? These are all dharma exchange kōans. Therefore, again I ask you, “Why does Bodhidharma have no beard? Tell me! Tell me!

1. *What is Bodhidharma's original face?*
2. *I ask you, why does Bodhidharma have no beard?*

## 五 香嚴上樹

### Case 5. Xiāngyán’s “Man up in a Tree”

香嚴和尚云、如人上樹、口啣樹枝、手不攀枝、脚不踏樹。

Chán Master Xiāngyán<sup>i</sup> said, “It is like a man up in a tree hanging from a branch by his teeth; his hands cannot grasp a bough, his feet (tied and bound) cannot touch a limb.

樹下有人問西來意、不對即違他所問、若對又喪身失命。

An Emperor’s General appears<sup>ii</sup> under the tree and asks him, ‘Why did Bodhidharma come to China?’ If he does not answer, he evades his duty to respond to the question (and will be killed). If he does answer, he will lose his life.

正恁麼時、作麼生對。

“If you are this man, in this tree, how do you stay alive?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、縱有懸河之辨、惣用不著。

Even if your eloquent tongue flows like a river, here it is of no avail.

說得一大藏教、亦用不著。

Though you can expound the whole of Buddhist literature, it is of no use.

若向者裏對得著、活却從前死路頭、死却從前活路頭。

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<sup>i</sup> Xiāngyán Zhixián (908-987) 香嚴智閑, [wg]: Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien, [Kor]: Hyangōm, [Jap]: Kyōgen Chikan, Studied with Báizhàng, received transmission from his Dharma-brother Guishan

<sup>ii</sup> As an Emissary of the Emperor “Son of Heaven”, this General is asking a question to the Monk, if the monk does not answer the question satisfactorily, the General will cut him in two for not expounding the Dharma when questioned as a Monk. Monks were tax exempt and so the government was always wary of imposters and punished imposters severely.

If you solve this problem, you will give life to the way that has been dead until this moment and destroy the way that has been alive up to now.

其或未然、直待當來問彌勒。

Otherwise, you must wait for Maitreya Buddha<sup>i</sup> and ask him.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

香嚴真杜撰

Master Xiāngyán is a very bad man;

惡毒無盡限

he spreads his poison everywhere.

啞却納僧口

the mouths of monks are made mute,

通身逆鬼眼

and demon’s eyes sprout from their bodies.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** You are hanging by your teeth, so you cannot open your mouth. In addition, you cannot move your hands; you cannot move your body. You cannot do anything. This is a Kyūng Chul Mǔn kōan, everything stops and only one thing is possible. What is the one thing? There is only one way, not two ways—you have one way. If you find that, then a good answer is possible. The question is, “Why did Bodhidharma come to China?” If you open your mouth to answer, you fall to your death. If you do not answer, you evade your duty as a bodhisattva and this man will kill

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<sup>i</sup> Maitreya (Sanskrit), Metteyya (Pāli), or Jampa (Tibetan), is a future Buddha of this world in Buddhist eschatology. In some Buddhist literature, such as the Amitabha Sutra and the Lotus Sutra, he is referred to as Ajita Bodhisattva. Maitreya is a bodhisattva who in the Buddhist tradition is to appear on Earth, achieve complete enlightenment, and teach the pure dharma. According to scriptures, Maitreya will be a successor of the historic Śākyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. The prophecy of the arrival of Maitreya is found in the canonical literature of all Buddhist sects (Theravāda, Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna), and is accepted by most Buddhists as a statement about an actual event that will take place in the distant future.

you. If you are in the tree, how can you stay alive? That is the big question.

If you pass this Gate, you have finished half of the kōans. We have about one thousand seven hundred kōans. If you pass this gate, you have passed the equivalent of eight hundred and fifty kōans. Therefore, this is a difficult kōan. If you only pass the kōan, it is not interesting. If it becomes yours, then your mind, your body, and your world become one and function correctly. At that time, you attain freedom, correct function, and freedom from life and death is possible. So attain freedom from life and death. This means there is no life, no death; but if you only have that, you have a problem.

1. *If you are in the tree, how do you stay alive?"*

## 六 世尊拈花

### Case 6. The Buddha Holds up a Flower

世尊、昔、在靈山會上拈花示衆。

Long ago on Mount Grdhraṅkūta<sup>i</sup>, Śākyamuni Buddha<sup>ii</sup> held up a flower before the assembly.

是時、衆皆默然。

Everyone was silent.

惟迦葉者破顏微笑。

Only Venerable Mahākāśyapa<sup>iii</sup> broke into a broad smile.

世尊云、吾有正方眼藏、涅槃妙心、實相無相、微妙法

門、不立文字、教外別傳、付囑摩訶迦葉。

Śākyamuni Buddha said, “I have all-pervading true dharma eye, the incomparable mind of nirvana, the exquisite teaching of formless form, and the subtle dharma gate. Not dependent on words and speech, a special transmission outside the sutras. This I have entrusted to Venerable Mahākāśyapa.”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、黃面瞿曇、傍若無人。

<sup>i</sup> Mount Grdhraṅkūta 瞞鷲山釋迦淨土 (Vulture Peak) is sacred to the memory of the founders of both Buddhism and Jainism and associated with both the historical Buddha and Mahavira, the last Tirthankara of Jainism. It was here that Gautama Buddha spent several months meditating, and preaching at Grdhraṅkūta, he also delivered some of his famous sermons and converted King Bimbisara of Magadha and countless others to his religion.

<sup>ii</sup> Siddhārtha Gautama (Sanskrit: सिद्धार्थ गौतम; Chinese: 釋迦牟尼佛); was a spiritual teacher in the north eastern region of the Indian subcontinent who founded Buddhism. In most Buddhist traditions, he is regarded as the Supreme Buddha of our age, “Buddha” meaning “awakened one” or “the enlightened one.” The time of his birth and death are uncertain: most early twenty-first-century historians date his lifetime as c. 563 BCE to 483 BCE; more recently, however, at a specialist symposium on this question, the majority of those scholars who presented definite opinions gave dates within twenty years either side of 400 BCE for the Buddha’s death, with others supporting earlier or later dates.

<sup>iii</sup> Mahākāśyapa or Kāśyapa was a Brahman of Magadha, who became one of the principal disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha and who convened and directed the first council. Mahākāśyapa is one of the most revered of the Buddha’s early disciples, foremost in ascetic practices. He is often depicted in statuary together with Ānanda, each standing to one side of the Buddha.

Golden-faced Gautama really disregarded his listeners.

壓良爲賤、縣羊頭賣狗肉。

He made the good look bad and sold dog's meat labeled as mutton.

將謂、多少奇特。

He himself thought it was wonderful.

只如當時大衆都笑、正方眼藏、作麼生傳。

If, however, everyone in the audience had laughed, how could he have transmitted his True Eye?

設使迦葉不笑、正方眼藏又作麼生傳。

And again, if Mahàkàsyapa had not smiled, how could the Buddha have transmitted it?

若道正方眼藏有傳授、黃面老子、誑口閨闥。

If you say the True Dharma Eye can be transmitted, then the golden-faced old man would be a city slicker who cheats the country bumpkin.

若道無傳授、爲甚麼獨許迦葉。

If you say it cannot be transmitted, then why did the Buddha approve of Mahàkàsyapa?

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

拈起花來

holding up a flower,

尾巴已露

the tail already apparent.

迦葉破顏

heaven and earth were bewildered,

人天罔措

at Venerable Mahàkàsyapa's smile.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Zen Master Seung Sahn (perhaps the late seventies or very early eighties) traveled to the Nalanda District of the Bihar State in India. He visited the current site of Vulture Peak and when he was standing on top of the hill, which according to him was more like a mound of dirt; Zen Master Seung Sahn said, "Oh, I think this place is much too small to fit two thousand five hundred monks in an assembly. Two Thousand Six Hundred years ago, Buddha held up a flower here. Today I hold up this stick. So tell me, are Buddha's flower and my stick the same or different?"

1. *Why did Mahàkàsyapa smile?*
2. *Why did Buddha pick up the flower?*
3. *What kind of Dharma transmission was given to Mahàkàsyapa?*
4. *If you were Mahàkàsyapa, how would you respond to Buddha's speech?*
5. *If you were Buddha and no one smiled, what would you have done?*
6. *If you were Buddha and everyone smiled, what would you have done?*
7. *What would be the correct kind of transmission for Buddha to give to Mahàkàsyapa?*
8. *Is Seung Sahn's stick and Buddha's flower the same or different?*

## 七 趙州洗鉢

### Case 7. Zhàozhōu's "Washing the Bowls"

趙州、因僧問、其甲乍入叢林。乞師指示。

A monk said to Chán Master Zhàozhōu<sup>i</sup>, “I have just entered this monastery. Please teach me, Master.”

州云、喫粥了也未。

“Have you had breakfast?” asked Venerable Zhàozhōu.

僧云、喫粥了也。

“Yes, I have,” replied the monk.

州云、洗鉢盂去。其僧有省。

“Then,” said Master Zhàozhōu, “go and better wash your bowls.” The monk was enlightened.

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、趙州開口見膽、露出心肝。

When he opens his mouth, Chán Master Zhàozhōu shows his gallbladder. He displays his heart and liver.

者僧聽事不眞、喚鐘作甕。

I wonder if this monk really did hear the truth. I hope he did not mistake the bell for a jar.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

只爲分明極

it is already clear

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<sup>i</sup> Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn (778-897) 趙州從諗 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [kusz] Jo Ju, [Jap]: Jōshū Jūshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn

翻令所得遲

attaining enlightenment is already past

早知燈是火

don't you know that flame is fire?

飯熟已多時

your breakfast has long been cooked.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** What did the monk attain? This is very simple. "Please teach me." "Did you have breakfast?" "Yes." "Then wash your bowls." This is correct function and correct relationship. This is everyday mind. This is an everyday mind kōan, just do it. Everyday life is the truth and the correct way. Everyday life is the Great Bodhisattva Way.

What did the monk attain? Do not attach to the Zen Masters words. If you attain this point, you understand correct situation, correct function and correct relationship moment after moment after moment. The monk attained his correct situation. Breakfast in the morning, lunch at noon, dinner in the evening, after the meal, do you understand your job? Then do it.

1. *What did the monk attain?*

2. *If you were the monk, what could you say to Zhàozhōu?*

## 八 奚仲造車

### Case 8. Xizhòng made Carts

月庵和尚問僧、奚仲造車一百輻。

Chán Master Yuèān<sup>i</sup> said to a monk, “Xizhòng<sup>ii</sup>, the first wheel maker, made a cart whose wheels had a hundred spokes.

拈却兩頭、去却輻、明甚麼邊事。

Take both front and rear parts away and remove the axle.  
What then becomes clear?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若也直下明得、眼、似流星、機、如掣電。

If anyone can directly master this topic, his eye will be like a shooting star, his spirit like a flash of lightning.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

##### 機輪轉處

where the wheel of mind activity turns,

##### 達者猶迷

even the master falls into ignorance.

##### 四維上下

the four directions, above and below,

##### 南北東西

North, South, East, and West.

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<sup>i</sup> Yuèān Shànguō (no dates) 月庵善果[wg]: Yüeh-an Shan-kuo, [Kor]: Wõlam

<sup>ii</sup> Xizhòng (no dates) 奚仲[wg]: Hsi-chung, [Kor]: Hyechung

Seung Sahn's Comment: In the vast sky, clouds appear and disappear. Already everything is clear.

1. *When all of the parts are taken away, what then becomes clear?*
2. *What did you attain from this Kōan?*

## 九 大通智勝

### Case 9. Xiāngyán’s Non-attained Buddha

興陽讓和尚、因僧問、大通智勝佛、十劫坐道場、佛法不現前、不得成佛道時如何。

A monk asked Chán Master Xiāngyán<sup>i</sup>, “The Buddha of Supremely Pervading, surpassing Wisdom sat in meditation for ten kalpas and could not attain Buddhahood. He did not become a Buddha. Why?”

讓曰、其問甚諦當。

Venerable Xiāngyán said, “Your question is quite self-evident.”

僧云、既是坐道場、爲甚麼不得成佛道。

The monk persisted, “He meditated so long; why did he not attain Buddhahood?”

讓曰、爲伊不成佛。

Master Xiāngyán said, “Because he would not become Buddha.”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、只許老胡知、不許老胡會。

I allow the barbarian’s realization, but I do not allow his understanding.

凡夫若知、既是聖人。

When an ignorant man realizes it, he is a sage.

聖人若會、既是凡夫。

When a sage understands it, he is ignorant.

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<sup>i</sup> Xiāngyán Zhixián (908-987) 香嚴智闍, [wg]: Hsiang-yen Chih-hsien, [Kor]: Hyangōm, [Jap]: Kyōgen Chikan, Studied with Báizhàng, received transmission from his Dharma-brother Guishan.

## 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

了身何似了心休

rather than resting the body, rest the mind.

了得心身不愁

if you completely attain mind, the body is not a problem.

若也身心俱了了

when both body and mind are clear,

神仙何必更封候

even asuras and hungry ghosts see little value in worldly power.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** The Huáyán Sutra states, “Each mote particle has Buddha-nature, so everything has already become Buddha.” If someone wants to become Buddha, this is already a big mistake. So, be careful.

1. *Why did he not attain Buddhahood?*
2. *What is the meaning of, “Because he would not become Buddha?”*

## 十 清税弧貧

### Case 10. Qīngshuì Is Alone and Poor

曹山和尚、因僧問云、清税弧貧。

Reverend Qīngshuì said to Chán Master Cáoshān<sup>i</sup>, “I am poor and destitute.

乞、師賑濟。

Please help me, Master?”

山云、稅闇梨。

Master Cáoshān called out, “Reverend Qīngshuì!”

稅、應諾。

Reverend Qīngshuì responded, “Yes!”

山曰、青原白家酒、三盞喫了、猶道未沾唇。

Venerable Cáoshān said, “You have already drunk three goblets of the Zen Ancestor’s wine, and still you say you have not yet wet your lips!”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、清税輸機、是何心行。

Reverend Qīngshuì missed his opportunity. What was going on in his mind?

曹山具眼、深辨來機。

Chán Master Cáoshān had a keen eye and could perceive the states of those who visited.

然雖如是、且道、那裏是稅闇梨、喫酒處。

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<sup>i</sup> Cáoshān Benji (840-901) [Jap]: Sozan Honjaku, [Kor]: Chosan, together with his master Dòngshān, Cáoshān goes down in history as co-creating the Cáodòng School (J. Soto) of Chan (the name is literally a combination of the “mountain names” of both), one of the 5 “houses” of classical Zen in China. He came from the area of modern Quanzhou, Fujian. Named his temple location Mt. Cao in the Fuzhou district after Huinéng’s temple in Guangdong. Started another temple at Mt. Heyu, and named that Cáoshān too.

However, please tell me, where did Reverend Qīngshùi drink the wine?

**頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse**

貧似范丹

poor as the poorest,

氣如項羽

brave as the bravest;

活計雖無

though he had nothing to live on,

敢與鬪富

he dared to challenge the rich and powerful.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** A dog ate Qīngshūi’s mind, running around and around, east and west.

1. “*I am poor and destitute please help me, Master? ” what does this mean?*
2. *What is the meaning of “You have already drunk three goblets of the Zen Ancestor’s wine?”*
3. *“You say you have not yet wet your lips!” What does this mean?*

## 十一 州勘庵主

### Case 11. Zhàozhōu's Hermits

趙州、到一庵主處問、有麼有麼。

Chán Master Zhàozhōu<sup>i</sup> went to where a hermit was practicing and asked, “Do you have it? Do you have it?”

主、堅起拳頭。

The hermit held up his fist.

州云、水淺不是泊舡處。便行。

Master Zhàozhōu said, “You are a blind dog, a ship cannot anchor in shallow water.” Then he left.

又到一庵主處云、有麼有麼。

Coming upon another hermit’s retreat, he asked again, “Do you have it? Do you have it?”

主亦堅起拳頭。

The hermit also raised his fist.

州云、能縱能奪、能殺能活。便作禮。

Master Zhàozhōu said, “You are free to give, and free to take; free to kill, and free to give life,” then he bowed very deeply.

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、一般堅起拳頭、爲甚麼肯一箇、不肯一箇。

Both alike raised their fists; why was one accepted and another rejected?

且道、訛在甚處。

So, please tell me, what is the confusion here?

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<sup>i</sup> Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn (778-897) 趙州從諗 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [Jap]: Jôshû Jûshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn

若向者裏下得一轉語、便見趙州舌頭無骨、扶起放倒得自在。

If you can utter a turning word, you will realize that Master Zhāozhōu's tongue has no bone, he helps some to get up, while knocking others to the ground with perfect freedom.

雖然如是爭奈、趙州却被二庵主勘破。

However, it is important to realize that the two hermits could also see right through the old Master.

若道二庵主有優劣、未具參學眼。

If you say that one hermit was better or worse, you still lack eye of realization.

若道無優劣、亦未具參學眼。

If you say that neither hermit was better or worse, you also still lack the eye of realization.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

眼流星

eyes like shooting stars,

機掣電

mind flashing like lighting;

殺人刀

a death-wielding blade,

活人劍

a life-giving sword.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** In this dialog there are two hermits; both were asked the same question, and both gave the same answer. So why on earth would Zen Master Zhāozhōu approve of one and disapprove of the other?

In our modern society, messages, images and media are constantly telling us what to do and enticing us on what to get to improve our situation. We hear things like “you should follow this path,” or “you should live your life this way,” or “you need to get this to make your life complete,” or “you aren’t safe unless you buy this product.” Lǎozi tells us in the Dǎodéqīng, “if you seek for the approval of others, you become their prisoner. How much do you believe in your true self?

This is a Kyung Chul Mun “single entry gate” style kōan. Only one answer is possible. What is this one thing? There is only one way in this kōan and not two ways—if you enter the world of opposites then you are lost, if you are not tangled then you can see through old Zhàozhōu’s comments.

There is only one path of discovery. You must relinquish your opinion, your condition and your situation. Forget about Zhàozhōu’s approval or disapproval. Ask your own true self the same question and see if you trust what appears. Zen Master Sungsan once said, “Together, these two monks killed Zhàozhōu and stuffed his body in a wine bottle.

1. *Why did Zhàozhōu approve of one answer and not the other?*
2. *If you were the first monk, what could you say to Zhàozhōu?*
3. *If you were the second monk, what could you say to Zhàozhōu?*

## 十二 巍喚主人

### Case 12. Ruiyán Calling the Master

瑞巖彥和尚、每日自喚主人公、復自應諾。

Chán Master Ruiyán<sup>i</sup> would call to himself every morning, “Master!” and he would always answer himself, “Yes!”

乃云、惺惺着。

Then he would say, “Keep clear and be alert!” then answer himself, “Yes!”

他時異日、莫受人瞞。

“From now on never be deceived by others!” Finally, he would conclude to himself, “Yes! Yes!”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、瑞巖老子、自買自賣、弄出許多神頭鬼面。

Old Master Ruiyán sells himself then buys himself. He takes out many Asura heads and hungry ghost faces putting each one on with a playful spirit.

何故。

What is the meaning of all this? Please listen!

一箇喚底、一箇應底。一箇惺惺底、一箇不受人瞞底。

One calling and the other answering; one wide awake, the other saying he will never be deceived.

認着依前還不是。

If you cling to recognition, you will not be correct.

若也倣他、惣是野狐見解。

If you imitate the Old Master, you are just a wild fox spirit.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

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<sup>i</sup> Ruiyán Shīyan (658-736) 趙州從諗, [wg]: Jui-yen Shih-yen, [Kor]: Sōngam Eōn, [Jap]: Zuigan Shigen, a Dharma-heir of Yántóu Quanho, he also studied with Jiashan Shanhai.

學道之人不識真

students of the Dao do not perceive the truth,

只爲從前認識神

it is simply because they cling to deluded consciousness.

無量劫來生死本

the roots of birth and death through infinite kalpas:

癡人喚作本來人

still, the ignorant name it their true original nature.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Ruiyán Shīyan used to call to himself and answer himself — two minds. Which one is the correct Master? Some people have not only two minds, but three minds, four minds, five minds, eighty minds, many, many minds—pain mind, sad mind, sex mind, money mind, all kinds of mind. Ruiyán Shīyan has only two minds: “Master!” “Yes!” “Keep a clear mind!”—two minds. Which one is the correct master? Two minds become one. If you become one, there is no mind, no master. Then you attain your true master. To attain this, first your master and your mind must disappear; then you are nothing. If you are nothing, then your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body can work correctly and you can see your master — everything is your master.

1. *Ruiyán Shīyan used to call himself, and answer himself, two minds. Which one is the correct Master?*

## 十三 德山托鉢

### Case 13. Deshān Carrying His Bowls

德山、一日托鉢下堂。

One day Deshān<sup>i</sup> went down toward the dining room, carrying his bowls.

見雪峰問者老漢鐘未鳴鼓未響、托鉢向甚處去、山便回方丈。

The housemaster, Xuěfēng<sup>ii</sup>, met him and asked, “The bell has not rung, and the drum has not been struck. Where are you going, carrying your bowls?” Deshān turned and went back to his room.

峰舉似巖頭。頭云、大小德山未會末後句。

Xuěfēng mentioned this to the head monk, Yántóu<sup>iii</sup>, who remarked, “Deshān is great, but he does not understand the last word.”

山聞令侍者喚巖頭來、問曰、汝不肯老僧那。

Deshān heard about this remark and sent his attendant to get Yántóu. “You do not approve of me?” he demanded.

巖頭密啓其意。

Then Yántóu whispered something in his Master’s ear.

山乃休去。明日陞座、果與尋常不同。

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<sup>i</sup> Deshān Xuānjian (781-867) 德山宣鑑, [wg]: Te-shan Hsüan-chien, [Kor]: Duksan, [kusz]: Dok Sahn, [Jap]: Tokusan Senkan, a Dharma-heir of Lóngtán Chóngxin

<sup>ii</sup> Xuěfēng Yicún (822-908) 雪峰義存, [wg]: Hsüeh-feng I-ts’un, [Kor]: Sôlbong, [Jap]: Seppô Gison a Dharma-heir of Deshān Xuānjian

<sup>iii</sup> Yántóu Quánjué (d 842) 巖頭全齋, [wg]: Yen-t’ou Ch’üan-huo, [Kor]: Amdu, [Jap]: Gantô Zenkatsu a Dharma-heir of Deshān Xuānjian.

Deshān was relieved. The next day he ascended the rostrum, and while giving his Dharma speech was very different from before!

巔頭至僧堂前、拊掌大笑云、且喜得老漢會末後句。

Yántóu, going toward the front of the hall, clapped his hands and laughed loudly, saying, “Great Joy! Our old Master has understood the last word!

他後天下人、不奈伊何。

From now on, nobody in this whole country can check him!”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若是未後句、巔頭德山俱未夢見在。

As for the last word, neither Yántóu nor Deshān has ever dreamed of it!

檢點將來、好似一棚傀儡。

When you look into the matter, you find they are like puppets on the shelf!

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

識得最初句

realize the first,

便會末後句

master the last.

末後與最初

first and last

不是者一句

are not one word.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** This is a famous kōan in China, Korea, and Japan. The last word means correct situation. In

other words, Yántóu was saying that his teacher did not understand his correct situation or function.

Yántóu's words were two kinds. At first Deshān Zen Master was very angry, so you must take away his angry mind. It is like a wife and a husband—they love each other very much, but one day the wife talks to her husband's friend: "My husband this, this, and this." Then her husband hears from his friend that his wife does not approve of something. Therefore, he begins checking, checking inside and outside. He is holding something, making something, and attached to something. Therefore, he is very busy, busy, and cannot control his mind, and therefore he may become afraid, confused, angry, full of desires, ignorant, sad, etc.—much suffering. Because of this, some people may feel desperate enough to kill themselves. This is a sickness of our modern era. Nobody guarantees our life. When you die, where are you going? What is life? What is death? These are primary questions. If you finish these primary questions, you are completely free, and you will get true happiness and everything.

In our modern age people like freedom and want happiness, but they do not understand what complete freedom and true happiness are. They only understand the path of freedom and the path of happiness. This type of freedom and happiness however is based upon changing phenomena; freedom is not freedom; there are many hindrances. Happiness is not happiness; and there is much suffering. This comes from where? Only holding tightly to an idea, or holding on to a situation and condition results in dissatisfaction. If we can relinquish or opinion, condition and situation, then the correct opinion, correct condition, and correct situation appear. If you keep enough mind moment to moment this is possible. In Daoism, it is written, "If I hear the True Way in the morning, and if I die in the evening, it is no problem." However, Zen is

originally in our true self and there is no life, no death. If you attain your true self, you will get freedom from life and death.

1. *What was the last word?*
2. *What did Yántóu whisper in the Master's ear?*
3. *How was the Master's speech different from before?*
4. *If you were Deshān, what could you say to the housemaster to prevent all these problems from occurring?*

## 十四 南泉斬貓

### Case 14. Nánquán Kills a Cat

南泉和尚因東西堂爭貓兒。

Once the monks of the Eastern and Western halls quarreling about the ownership of a cat.

泉乃提起云、大衆道得即救、道不得即斬却也。

Nánquán<sup>i</sup> Chán Master took the cat and while holding it up in front of the assembly said, “You! If you can give me one word of Chán, you will save the cat. If you cannot, I will kill it.”

衆無對。泉遂斬之。

No one could answer, and Nánquán cut the cat in two.

晚趙州外歸。泉舉似州。

That evening when Zhàozhōu<sup>ii</sup> returned from a trip outside of the temple, Nánquán told him of the incident.

州乃脫履安頭上而出。

Zhàozhōu took off his sandal, placed it on his head<sup>iii</sup>, and walked away.

泉云、子若在即救得貓兒。

“If you had been there, you would have saved the cat,” Nánquán remarked.

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、且道、趙州頂草鞋意作麼生。

<sup>i</sup> Nánquán Pǔyuàn (748-835) 南泉普願, [wg:] Nan-ch’üan P’u-yüan, [Kor]: Namchön, [Jap]: Nansen Fugan

<sup>ii</sup> Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn (778-897) 趙州從諱 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [Jap]: Jōshū Jūshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn

<sup>iii</sup> This is a culturally bound action; the act of placing your shoes or sandals on your head in Asian Culture is similar to the action of wearing black to a funeral or the wearing of a black armband.

Tell me, what did Zhàozhōu mean when he put the sandal on his head?

若向者裏下得一轉語、便見南泉令不虛行。

If you can give a turning word on this, you will see that Nánquán's decree was carried out with good reason.

其或未然險。

If not, "Danger!"

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

趙州若在

if Zhàozhōu had been there,

倒行此令

turning the world order upside-down;

奪却刀子

snatching away the knife,

南泉乞命

leaving Nánquán begging for his life.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The first question is, when Nánquán Zen Master holds up the cat and says, "Give me one word; then I will save the cat. If not, I will kill it"—what can you do? This is a love kōan. If you have Great Love and Great Compassion, then this kōan is no problem. Here is a hint: a long time ago during the time of King Solomon, there was an argument about a baby. Two women each said, "This is my baby!" Therefore, Solomon said, "Bring this baby, and I will divide it in two. Then each of you can take half." Then one woman said, "Oh, you take the baby it is yours."

Then who is the true mother? This is a love story. If you have Great Love inside, then you have a Zen mind. Unconditional means Great Love, Great Compassion, Great Bodhisattva Way. So unconditionally sit; unconditionally DO IT!

Unconditionally practice. Do not check your condition. This is Great Love. If your mind is unconditional, then this unconditional mind has no I, my, me. I do everything for all beings—for husband, for wife that is Great Love. Then it is possible to save the cat.

The last question is; Zhàozhōu walked away with his shoes on his head. Then Nánquán Zen Master said, “If you had been here, I could have saved the cat.” What does this mean? Why did Zhàozhōu put his shoes on his head and walk away? What does this mean? So keep your correct situation, correct condition, correct idea action. If you attain this kōan, then you attain Great Love, Great Compassion, Great Bodhisattva Way. This means moment to moment keep your correct situation, correct function and correct relationship.

1. *Nánquán said, “Give me one word.” At that time, what can you do?*
2. *Zhàozhōu put his shoes on his head. What does this mean?*

## 十五 洞山三頓

### Case 15. Dòngshān's Sixty Blows

雲門、因洞山參次、門問曰、近離甚處。

Dòngshān<sup>i</sup> came to study with Yúnmén<sup>ii</sup>. Yúnmén asked, “Where are you from?”

山云、查渡。

“From Chádù,” Dòngshān replied.

門曰、夏在甚處。

“Where were you during the summer?”

山云、湖南報慈。

“Well, I was at Bàočí monastery in Hunan.”

門曰、幾時離彼。

“When did you leave there,” Yúnmén asked.

山云、八月二十五。

“On August twenty-fifth” was Dòngshān’s reply.

門曰、放汝三頓棒。

“I spare you sixty blows,” Yúnmén said.

山至明日却上問訊。

昨日蒙和尚放三頓棒。

The next day Dòngshān came to Yúnmén and said, “Yesterday you said you spared me sixty blows.

不知過在甚麼處。

I don’t know where my mistake is?”

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<sup>i</sup> Dòngshān Liángjie (807-869) 洞山良价 [wg]: Tung-shan Liang-chieh, [Kor]: Dongsan, [Jap]: Tōzan Ryōkai

<sup>ii</sup> Yúnmén Wényǎn (1025-1115) 雲居道膺, [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmūn [Jap]: Ummon Bun’en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huinan.

門曰、飯袋子、江西湖南便恁麼去。

“You rice bag!” shouted Yúnmén. “What makes you wander about, now west of the river, now south of the lake?”

山於此大悟。

At this Dòngshān got enlightenment.

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、雲門、當時便與本分草料、使洞山別有生機一路、家門不致寂寥。

If Yúnmén had given Dòngshān the true food of Chán and encouraged him to develop an active Chán spirit, his school would not have declined as it did.

一夜在是非海裏著到、直待天明再來、又與他注破。

Dòngshān had an agonizing struggle through the whole night, lost in the sea of right and wrong. He reached a complete impasse. After waiting for the dawn, he again went to Yúnmén, and Yúnmén again made him a picture book of Chán.

洞山直下悟去、未是性燥。

Even though he was directly enlightened, Dòngshān could not be called brilliant.

且問諸人、洞山三頓棒、合喫不合喫。

Now, I want to ask you, should Dòngshān have been given sixty blows or not?

若道合喫、草木叢林皆合喫棒。

If you say yes, you admit that the entire universe should be beaten.

若道不合喫、雲門又成誑語。

If you say no, then you accuse Yúnmén of telling a lie.

向者裏明得、方與洞山出一口氣。

If you really understand the secret, you will be able to breathe out Chán spirit with the very mouth of Dòngshān.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

獅子教兒迷子訣

lion mother teaches her cub;

擬前跳躡早翻身

the cub crouched, leaped, and dashed forward.

無端再敍當頭著

second time, a casual move led to success.

前箭猶輕後箭深

first arrow only grazes, second goes in deep.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Snow in the north, rain in the south, somebody already got enlightenment—already a big mistake. Go drink tea.

1. *Why did Yúnmén give Dòngshān sixty blows with a stick?*
2. *What is the meaning of prowling around Bàoци monastery in Hunan?*
3. *Dòngshān got enlightenment, what did he attain?*

## 十六 鐘聲七條

### Case 16. When the Bell Sounds

雲門曰、世界恁麼廣闊。

Yúnmén<sup>i</sup> said, “The world is vast and wide.

因甚向鐘聲裏披七條。

Why do you put on your seven-fold robe<sup>ii</sup> at the sound of the bell?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、大凡參禪學道、切忌、隨聲遂色。

In studying Chán, you should not be swayed by sounds and forms.

縱使聞聲悟道、見色明心也是尋常。

Even though you attain insight when hearing a voice or seeing a form, this is simply the ordinary way of things.

殊不知、納僧家、騎聲蓋色、頭頭上明、著著上妙。

Don’t you know that the real Chán student commands sounds, controls forms, are clear-sighted at every event and free on every occasion?

然雖如是。且道、聲來耳畔、耳往聲邊。

Granted you are free, just tell me: Does the sound come to the ear or does the ear go to the sound?

直饒響寂雙忘、到此如何話會。

If both sound and silence die away, at such a juncture how could you talk of Chán?

若將耳聽應難會、眼處聞聲方始親。

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<sup>i</sup> Yúnmén Wényān (1025-1115) 雲居道膺, [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmün [Jap]; Ummon Bun'en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huinan.

<sup>ii</sup> In Zen Buddhism this is the Kasa, Rakusu or O’Kesa which is worn over the robes and represents the Buddha’s robes originating in India.

While listening with your ear, you cannot tell. When hearing with your eye, you are truly intimate.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

會則事同一家

with realization, the ten thousand things return to one;

不會萬別千差

without realization, the ten thousand things are all separated.

不會事同一家

without realization, all things become one;

會則萬別千差

with realization, things are separated in a thousand ways.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** Your mind and this world, which one is bigger? Open your mouth and you cannot find your direction. Close your mouth and you lose your direction. At the sound of the bell, go to the Dharma Room for practice.

1. “*The world is vast and wide,*” what does this mean.
2. *Why do you put on your seven-fold robe at the sound of the bell?*”
3. *If you do not have a seven-fold robe, what can you do?*

## 十七 國師三喚

### Case 17. The National Teacher Gives Three Calls

國師三喚侍者。侍者三應。

The National Teacher called his attendant three separate times, and three separate times the attendant responded.

國師云、將謂吾辜負汝、元來却是汝辜負吾。

The National Teacher said, “I thought I had deserted you, but originally, you deserted me.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、國師三喚、舌頭墮地。

The National Teacher called three times, and his tongue fell to the ground.

侍者三應、和光吐出。

The attendant responded three times, and he gave his answer with brilliance.

國師年老心孤、按牛頭喫草。

The National Teacher was old and lonely; he held the cow’s head and forced it to eat grass.

侍者未肯承當。

The attendant would have none of it,

美食不中飽人、且道、那裏是他辜負處。

delicious food has little attraction for a man who is sated.  
Tell me, at what point was the betrayal?

國淨才子貴、家富小兒嬌。

When the country is flourishing, talent is prized. When the home is wealthy, the children are proud.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

鉄枷無孔要人擔

someone must wear the iron collar with no hole

累及兒孫不等閑

leaving a curse to trouble his descendants.

欲得門并戶

if you want to hold up the gate and the house,

更須赤脚上刀山

climb the mountain of swords with your bare feet.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The grandfather loves his grandson; the grandson only tolerates his grandfather, he only wants candy.

1. *Calling someone one time is enough, why call three times?*
2. *"I thought I had deserted you, but originally, you deserted me." What does this mean?*
3. *If you were the attendant, what could you do?*

## 十八 洞山三斤

### Case 18. Dòngshān’s “Three Pounds of Flax”

洞山和尚、因僧問、如何是佛。

A monk asked Dòngshān<sup>i</sup>, “What is Buddha?”

山云、麻三斤。

Dòngshān replied, “Three pounds of flax<sup>ii</sup>. ”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、洞山老人、參得些蚌蛤禪、纔開兩片露出肝腸。

Old Dòngshān attained the poor Chán of a clam. He opened the two halves of the shell a little and exposed all the liver and intestines inside.

然雖如是、且道、向甚處見洞山。

However, tell me, how do you see Dòngshān?

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

突出麻三斤

three pounds of flax comes sweeping along;

言親意更親

intimate words, intimate mind.

來說是非者

arguing about right and wrong

便是是非人

are those enslaved by right and wrong.

---

<sup>i</sup> Dòngshān Shōuchū (807-869) 洞山守初, [wg]: Tung-shan Shou-ch'u, [Kor]: Dongsan, [Jap]: Tōzan Shusho a Dharma-heir of Yunyan Tansheng.

<sup>ii</sup> Flax is a generic representation of what was most likely linen fabric as flax is the raw material from which linen is manufactured.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Big mistake, big mistake, Dòngshān does not understand three pounds of flax; however, three pounds of flax understands Dòngshān's two eyes.

1. *What is Buddha?*
2. *What does "three pounds of flax mean?"*
3. *If you were the monk, what could you say?*

## 十九 平常是道

### Case 19. Nánquán’s “Ordinary Mind Is the Way”

南泉、因趙州問、如何是道。

Zhàozhōu<sup>i</sup> asked Nánquán<sup>ii</sup>, “What is the true way?”

泉云、平常心是道。

“Ordinary mind is the true way,” Nánquán replied.

州云、還可趣向否。

“Then, should I try to keep it or not?” Zhàozhōu asked.

泉云、擬向即乖。

“If you try to keep it, you will become separated from it,” responded Nánquán.

州云、不擬爭知是道。

“How can I know the true way unless I try to understand it?” persisted Zhàozhōu.

泉云、道不屬知、不屬不知。

Nánquán said, “The true way is not dependant on understanding or not understanding.

知是妄覺、不知是無記。

Understanding is illusion; not understanding is blankness.

若真達不擬之道、猶如太虛廓然洞豁。

If you completely attain the true way of not thinking, it like space, clear and void.

豈可強是非也。

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<sup>i</sup> Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn (778-897) 趙州從諗 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [Jap]: Jôshû Jûshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pÿyuân

<sup>ii</sup> Nánquán Pÿyuân, (748-835) 南泉普願, [wg]: Nan-ch’üan P’u-yüan, [Kor]: Namchöñ, [Jap]: Nansen Fugan. Nánquán received transmission of the Dharma from Mâzû Dâoyî. Nánquán gave transmission to seventeen of his students, and amongst them, Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn and Changsha Jingcen have the most recorded history.

So, why do you make right and wrong?"

州於言下頓悟。

With these words, Zhàozhōu attained enlightenment.

### Master Wúmén's Comment

無門曰、南泉被趙州發問、直得瓦解冰消、分疎不下。

Nánquán dissolved and melted away before Zhàozhōu's question, and could not offer a plausible explanation.

趙州縱饒悟去、更參三十年始得。

Even though Zhàozhōu comes to a realization, he must delve into it for another thirty years before he can fully understand it.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

春有百花秋有月

fragrant spring flowers, silver autumn moon;

夏有涼風冬有雪

cool breezes in Summer, white snow in winter.

若無閑事挂心頭

freeing your mind of useless thought,

更是人間好時節

the best season of your life has arrived.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Not eating for three days, you only desire food. Walking through the desert, you only desire water. The baby cries, and wants to see its mother. Everything is clear, many stars in the night sky, may trees on the mountainside.

#### 1. *What is the true way?*

2. “*Everyday mind is the true way.*” What does this mean?
3. “*It is like space, clear and void.*” What does this mean?
4. *What did Zhàozhōu attain?*
5. *If you were Zhàozhōu, what would you say to Nánquán?*

## 二十 大力量人

### Case 20. A Man of Great Strength

松源和尚云、大力量人、因甚擡脚不起。

Sōngyuán<sup>i</sup> Chán Master asked, “Why is it that a man of great strength does not lift his legs?”

又云、開口不在舌頭上。

In addition, he said, “It is not with his tongue that he speaks.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、松源可謂、傾腸倒腹。

It must be said that Sōngyuán shows us all his stomach and intestines.

只是欠人承當。

However, no one can appreciate him!

縱饒直下承當、正好來無門處喫痛棒。

Moreover, even if someone could appreciate him, let him come to me, and I will beat him severely.

何故。

Why?

要識真金、火裏看。

If you want to find pure gold, you must see it through fire.

#### 頌曰Master Wúmén’s Verse

擡脚踏翻香水海

lifting his leg, he crushes the scented ocean;

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<sup>i</sup> Sōngyuán (1132-1202) 松源, [Jap]: Shogen Sugaku, [Kor]: Sönwon, Contemporary of Chán Master Wúmén (compiler of the Wúménguān, Gateless Gate), but 30 years older

**低頭俯視四禪天**

lowering his head, he looks down on the four dhyāna heavens.

**一箇渾身無處著請**

there is no place vast enough for this huge body—

**續一句**

someone else will have to finish this.

## 二十一 雲門屎橛

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** You ate too much, so you must exercise. If you are thirsty, you must find a well. If you are tired, you must go to sleep.

1. *Why is it that a man of great strength cannot lift his legs?*
2. *How does he speak without his tongue?*
3. *Who is a man of great strength?*

## 二十一 雲門屎櫈

### Case 21. Yúnmén’s “Dry Shit on a Stick”

雲門、因僧問、如何是佛。

A monk asked Yúnmén<sup>i</sup>, “What is Buddha?”

門云、乾屎櫈。

Yúnmén replied, “Dry shit on a stick.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、雲門可謂、家貧難辨素食、事忙不及草書。

Yúnmén was too poor to prepare plain food, too busy to speak from notes.

動便將屎櫈來、□門挂戶。

He hurriedly took up this shit stick to support the gate and shore up the walls.

佛法興衰可見。

The decline of Buddhism was thus foreshadowed.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

閃電光

lightning flashing,

擊石化

sparks shooting;

貶得眼

a moment’s blinking,

已蹉過

missed forever.

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<sup>i</sup> Yúnmén Wényān (1025-1115) 雲居道膺, [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmün [Jap]:, Ummon Bun'en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huinan.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Yúnmén's mouth smells bad. How do you remove the smell? Take him to the bathroom and rinse his mouth out.

1. *What is Buddha?*
2. *What is dry shit on a stick?*
3. *If you were the monk, what could you say to Yúnmén?*

## 二十二 迦葉刹竿

### Case 22. Mahàkàsyapa’s “Flagpole”

迦葉、因阿難問云、世尊傳金襴袈裟外、別傳何物。

Ānanda<sup>i</sup> asked Mahàkàsyapa<sup>ii</sup>, “The World-honored One transmitted to you the golden brocade robe; did he give you anything else?”

葉喚云、阿難。

Mahàkàsyapa called out, “Ānanda!”

難、應諾。

“Yes, sir!” answered Ānanda.

葉云、倒却門前刹竿著。

“Knock down the flagpole at the gate,” said Mahàkàsyapa.

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若向者裏下得一轉語親切、便見靈山一會儼然未散。

If you can give a turning word at this point, you will see that the meeting at Mount Grdhrrakuta is still solemnly continuing. 其或未然、毘婆尸佛、早留心、直至而今不得妙。

If not, then this is what Vipasyin Buddha worried about from remote ages; up to now, he has still not acquired the essence.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

<sup>i</sup> Ānanda was one of many principal disciples and a devout attendant of the Buddha. Amongst the Buddha's many disciples, Ānanda had the most retentive memory and most of the suttas in the Sutta Pitaka are attributed to his recollection of the Buddha's teachings during the First Buddhist Council. For that, he was known as the Guardian of the Dharma

<sup>ii</sup> Mahàkàsyapa (Sanskrit; Pali: Mahakassapa) or Kàśyapa was a Brahman of Magadha, who became one of the principal disciples of Śàkyamuni Buddha and who convened and directed the first council. Mahàkàsyapa is one of the most revered of the Buddha's early disciples, foremost in ascetic practices. He is often depicted in statuary together with Ānanda, each standing to one side of the Buddha.

問處何如答處親

question or answer—which was more intimate?

幾人於此眼生筋

how many strain their eyes over this;

兄呼弟鷹揚家醜

elder brother calls, younger brother answers, the family  
shame appears.

不屬陰陽別是春

without yin and yang, they had a special spring.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The sky has no clouds, but  
lightening hits the flagpole. Mahākāsyapa and Ānanda both  
lose their jobs.

1. *What else did Buddha transmit to Mahākāsyapa?*
2. *What does the call and answer between Mahākāsyapa and Ānanda mean?*
3. *“Knock down the flagpole in front of the gate.” What does this mean?”*

## 二十三 不思善惡

### Case 23. Don't Think Good and Bad

六祖、因明上座、趁至大庾嶺。

The Sixth Ancestor<sup>i</sup> was pursued by the monk Shénxiù<sup>ii</sup> as far as Zhīrú Mountain.

祖見明至、即擲衣鉢於石上云、此衣表信。可力爭耶、任君將去。

The Ancestor, seeing Shénxiù coming, laid the robe and bowl on a rock and said, “This robe represents the faith; it should not be fought over. If you want to take it away, take it now.”

明遂舉之如山不動、踟惻慄。明白、我來求法、非爲衣也。

Shénxiù tried to move it, but it was as heavy as a mountain and would not budge. Faltering and trembling, he cried out, “I came for the Dharma, not for the robe.

願行者開示。

I beg you; please give me your instruction.”

祖云、不思善、不思惡、正與麼時、那箇是明上座本來面目。

The Ancestor said, “Think neither good nor evil. At this very moment, what is the original self of the monk Shénxiù?”

明當下大悟、遍體汗流。

At these words, Shénxiù was directly illuminated. His whole body was covered with sweat.

泣淚作禮、問曰、上來密語密意外、還更有意旨否。

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<sup>i</sup> Dàjiāng Huinéng (683-713) 大江慧能 [wg]: Ta-ching Hui-neng, [Kor]: Hyenüng, [Jap]: Enō a Dharm-heir of Damian Hóngrěn

<sup>ii</sup> Datong Shénxiù (605-706) 神秀, [wg]: Shen-hsiu, [Jap]: Jinshū

He wept and bowed, saying, “Besides the secret words and the secret meaning you have just now revealed to me, is there anything else, deeper still?”

祖曰、我今爲汝說者、即非密也。

The Ancestor said, “What I have told you is no secret at all.  
汝若返照自己面目、密却在汝邊。

When you look into your own true self, whatever is deeper is found right there.”

明云、其申雖在黃梅隨衆、實未省自己面目。

Shénxiù said, “I was with the monks under Hóngrěn for many years but I could not realize my true self.

今蒙指授入處、如人飲水冷暖自知。

Now, receiving your instruction, I know it is like a man drinking water and knowing whether it is cold or warm.

今行者即是某甲師也。

My lay brother, you are now my teacher.”

祖云、汝若如是則吾與汝同師黃梅。

The Ancestor said, “If you say so, but let us both call Hóngrěn our teacher.

善自護持。

Be mindful to treasure and hold fast to what you have attained.”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無問曰、六祖可謂、是事出急家老婆心切。

The Sixth Ancestor was, so to speak, hurried into helping a man in an emergency, and he displayed a grandmotherly kindness.

譬如新荔支剥了殼去了核、送在你口裏、只要你嚥一  
嚥。

It is as though he peeled a fresh lichi, removed the seed, put it in your mouth, and asked you to swallow it down.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

描不成兮畫不就

you cannot describe it; you cannot picture it;

贊不及兮休生受

you cannot admire it; don't try to eat it raw.

本來面目沒處藏

your true self has nowhere to hide;

世界壞時渠不朽

when the world is destroyed, it is not destroyed.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The Sixth Ancestor has two eyes. Shénxiù has two ears. They each have one mouth. Together they see and hear, but their speech is different. One goes south, and one goes north.

1. *Do not think good and bad, what is your original face?*
2. *What did Shénxiù attain?*
3. *What is the secret you already have?*
4. *What is the meaning of “Only go straight?”*

## 二十四 離却語言

### Case 24. Fēngxuè's Speech and Silence

風穴和尚、因僧問、語默涉離微、如何通不犯。

A monk asked Fēngxuè<sup>i</sup>, “Both speech and silence include separation and union<sup>ii</sup>. How can we escape these faults?”

穴云、長憶江南三月裏、鷦鷯啼處百花香。

Fēngxuè said,

I always remember the spring in Jiāngnán,  
Where the partridges sing;  
How fragrant the countless flowers!

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、風穴機如掣電得路便行。

Fēngxuè’s Chán spirit was like lightning and opened a clear passage.

爭奈坐前人舌頭不斷。

However, he was entangled in the monk’s words and could not cut them off.

若向者裏見得親切、自有出身之路。

If you can really grasp the problem, you can readily find the way out.

且離却語言三昧、道將一句來。

Now, putting language Samadhi aside, say it in your own words.

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<sup>i</sup> Fēngxuè Yánzhǎo (892-973) 風穴延沼[Jap]: Fuketsu Ensho, [Kor]: Punghol, he was a Dharma Heir of Nányuàn and teacher of Shoushan. All of the Linjì [Jap]: Rinzai lineages of Zen masters descend from Fēngxuè Yánzhǎo.

<sup>ii</sup> Lí [離 inward action of mind] and Wēi [微 outward action of mind]

## 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

不露風骨句

he does not use a refined phrase;

未語先分付

before speaking, he has already handed it over.

進步口喃喃

if you chatter on and on,

知君大罔措

you will find you have lost your way.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Open your mouth, there is no tongue. Open your eyes there is no pupil. How do you fix this, you must go to Jiāngnán and ask the partridges.

1. *Without speech and silence, how can you answer?*
2. *How can we be free and without mistake?*
3. *Where is Fēngxuè's mistake?*

## 二十五 三座說法

### Case 25. Yǎngshān’s Dream

仰山和尚、夢見往彌勒所、安第三座。

In a dream, Yǎngshān<sup>i</sup> Chán Master went to Maitreya’s place and was led in to sit in the third seat.

有一尊者、白槌云、今日當第三座說法。

A senior monk struck with a gavel and said, “Today the one in the third seat will speak.”

山乃起白槌云、摩訶衍法離四句、絕百非。

Yǎngshān rose and, striking with the gavel, said, “The truth of Mahayana is beyond the four propositions and transcends the hundred negations.

諦聽、諦聽。

Listen Carefully! Listen Carefully!”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、且道、是說法不說法、開口即失、閉口又喪。

Now tell me, did Yǎngshān preach or did he not? If he opens his mouth, he is lost; if he seals his mouth, he is lost.

不開不閉、十万八千。

Even if he neither opens nor shuts his mouth, he is a hundred and eight thousand [miles away from the truth].

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

白日晴天

in broad daylight, under the blue sky,

夢中說夢

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<sup>i</sup> Yǎngshān Huiji 仰山, (813–890) [Jap]: Kyozan Ejaku, [Kor]: Angsan

he forges a dream in a dream;  
捏怪捏怪  
he makes up a monstrous story  
誑一衆  
and tries to deceive the whole crowd.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** This world and human life are like a dream. Two men discuss the dream, when will they wake up? Outside the house, at three in the morning the rooster is crowing, cock-doodle-do, cock-a-doodle-do.

1. *How would you answer the emperor's question?*
2. *Yāngshān made a big mistake, where is it?*
3. *What did you attain from this kōan?*

## 二十六 二僧卷簾

### Case 26. Two Monks Roll Up the Blinds

清涼大法眼、因僧齋前上參。眼以手指簾。

When the monks assembled before the midday meal to listen to his lecture, the great Făyǎn<sup>i</sup> of Qīngliáng pointed at the bamboo blinds.

時有二僧、同去卷簾。

Two monks simultaneously went and rolled them up.

眼曰、一得一失。

Făyǎn said, “One has got it, one has lost it.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、且道、是誰得誰失。

Tell me, who gained and who lost?

若向者裏著得一隻眼、便知清涼國師敗闕處。

If you have an eye to penetrate the secret, you will see where the National Teacher in Qīngliáng failed.

然雖如是、切忌向得失裏商量。

However, I warn you strongly against discussing gain and loss.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

卷起明明徹太空

rolling up the blinds, the great sky is open,

太空猶未合吾宗

but the great sky does not come up to Chán.

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<sup>i</sup> Făyǎn Wenyi (885–958) [wg]: Fa-yen Wen-I, [Jap]: Hogen Mon’eki

爭似從空都放下

why don't you throw them all down from the sky,

綿綿密密不通風

and keep your practice so close that no air can escape?

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The two monk's action is very clear. Făyăn's speech is a big mistake, so how do you make it correct? Do you understand Făyăn's age? Go and ask the pine tree in front of the temple.

1. “*One has got it, one has lost it.*” What does this mean?
2. Which monk got it? Which monk lost it?
3. If you were there and Făyăn pointed at the blinds, what would you do?

## 二十七 不是心佛

### Case 27. Nánquán’s “Not Mind, Not Buddha, Not Things”

南泉和尚、因僧問云、還有不與人說底法麼。

A monk asked Nánquán<sup>i</sup> “Is there any Dharma that has not been preached to the people?”

泉云、有。

Nánquán answered, “There is.”

僧云、如何是不與人說底法。

“What is the truth that has not been taught?” asked the monk.

泉云、不是心、不是佛、不是物。

Nánquán said, “It is not mind; it is not Buddha; it is not things.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、南泉被者一問、直得揣盡家私、郎當不少。

At this question, Nánquán used up all his treasure and was not a little confused.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

叮嚀損君德

talking too much spoils your virtue;

無言真有功

silence is truly unequaled.

任從滄海變

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<sup>i</sup> Nánquán Pǔyuàn (748-835) 南泉普願, [wg:] Nan-ch’üan P’u-yüan, [Kor]: Namchöñ, [Jap]: Nansen Fugan

let the mountains become the sea;

終不爲君通

I'll give you no comment.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Ten thousand words, ten thousand mistakes. In complete silence, everything is clear right in front of you. Just see, just hear, just smell, just taste, and just touch.

1. *Is there without speech Dharma for all people?*
2. *Where is Nánquán's mistake?*
3. *"Is not mind, is not Buddha, is not anything." Then what is it?*

## 二十八 久嚮龍潭

### Case 28. Lóngtán Blows Out the Candle

龍潭、因德山請益抵夜。

Deshān<sup>i</sup> asked Lóngtán<sup>ii</sup> about Chán far into the night.

潭云、夜深。

Eventually, Lóngtán said, “The night is late.

子何不下去。

Why don’t you retire for the evening?”

山遂珍重揭簾而出。見外面黑却回云、外面黑。

Deshān made his bows and lifted the blinds to withdraw, but he was met by darkness. Turning back to Lóngtán, he said, “It is very dark outside.”

潭乃點紙燭度與。

Lóngtán lit a paper candle and handed it to him.

山擬接。潭便吹滅。

Deshān was about to take it when Lóngtán blew it out.

山於此忽然有省。便作禮。

At this, all of a sudden, Deshān went through a deep experience and made bows.

潭云、子見箇甚麼道理。

Lóngtán said, “What sort of realization do you have?”

山云、某甲從今日去不疑天下老和尚舌頭也。

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<sup>i</sup> Deshān Xuānjian (781-867) 德山宣鑑, [wg]: Te-shan Hsüan-chien, [Kor]: Duksan, [Jap]: Tokusan Senkan a Dharma-heir of Lóngtán Chóngxin 龍潭崇信.

<sup>ii</sup> Lóngtán Chóngxin (760-840) 龍潭崇信 [Kor]: Yongdam, [Jap]: Ryūtan Sōshin a Dharma Heir of Tiānlóng and teacher of Deshān.

“From now on,” said Deshān, “I will not doubt the words of an old Chán Master who is renowned everywhere under the sun.”

至明日、龍潭陞堂云、可中有箇漢、牙如劍樹、口似血盆。

The next day Lóngtán ascended the rostrum and said, “I see a fellow among you. His fangs are like the sword tree. His mouth is like a blood bowl.”

一棒打不回頭。

Strike him with a stick, and he will not turn his head to look at you.

他時異日、向孤峰頂上立君道在。

Someday or other, he will climb the highest of the peaks and establish our Way there.”

山遂取疏抄於法堂前、將一炬火提起云、窮諸玄辨、若一毫致於太虛、竭世樞機似一滴投於巨壑。

Deshān brought his notes on the Diamond Sutra to the front of the hall, pointed to them with a torch, and said, “Even though you have exhausted the abstruse doctrines, it is like placing a hair in a vast space. Even though you have learned all the secrets of the world, it is like a drop of water dripped on the great ocean.”

將疏抄便燒。

And he burned all his notes.

於是禮辭。

Then, making bows, he took his leave of his teacher.

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、德山未出關時、心憤憤、口得得來南方要滅却教外別傳之旨。

Before Deshān crossed the barrier from his native place, his mind burned and his mouth uttered bitterness. He went southward, intending to stamp out the doctrines of special transmission outside the sutras.

及到澧州路上問婆子買點心。

When he reached the road to Lǐzhōu, he asked an old woman to let him have lunch to “refresh the mind.”

婆云、大德車子內是甚麼文字。

“Your worship, what sort of literature do you carry in your pack?” the old woman asked.

山云、金剛經疏抄。

“Commentaries on the Diamond Sutra,” replied Deshān.

婆云、只如經中道、過去心不可得、見在心不可得、未來心不可得。

The old woman said, “I hear it is said in that sutra, ‘The past mind cannot be held, the present mind cannot be held, the future mind cannot be held.’”

大德、要點那箇心。

Now, I would like to ask you, what mind are you going to have refreshed?”

德山被者一問、直得口似□檻。

At this question, Deshān was dumbfounded.

然雖如是、未肯向婆子句下死却。遂問婆子、近處有甚麼宗師。

However, he did not remain inert under her words but asked, “Do you know of any good teacher around here?”

婆云、五里外有龍潭和尚。

The old woman said, “Five miles from here you will find Lóngtán Chán Master.”

及到龍潭納盡敗闕。

Coming to Lóngtán, Deshān got the worst of it.  
可謂是前言不應後語。  
His former words were inconsistent with his later ones.  
龍潭大似憐兒不覺醜。  
As for Lóngtán, he seemed to have lost all sense of shame in  
his compassion toward his son.  
見他有些子火種、郎忙將惡水薰頭一澆澆殺。  
Finding a bit of live coal in the other, enough to start a fire, he  
hurriedly poured on muddy water to annihilate everything at  
once.  
冷地看來、一場好笑。  
A little cool reflection tells us it was all a farce.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

聞名不如見面

hearing the name cannot surpass seeing the face;

見面不如聞名

seeing the face cannot surpass hearing the name.

雖然救得鼻孔

he may have saved his nose,

爭奈瞎却眼睛

but alas! he lost his eyes.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Nature is already teaching us everything, why do we need all the Sutras. If you attain your original face, you can toss all the Sutras into the fire. Then your world becomes complete.

#### 1. *What did Deshān attain?*

2. “*I see a fellow among you. His fangs are like the sword tree. His mouth is like a blood bowl.*” Who is this person?
3. “*From now on, I will not doubt the words of the old Chán Masters who are renowned everywhere under the sun.*” What does this mean?
4. “*Even though you have exhausted the abstruse doctrines, it is like placing a hair in a vast space.*” What does this mean?

## 二十九 非風非幡

### Case 29. Not Wind, Not Flag

六祖、因風颺刹幡。有二僧、對論。

The wind was flapping a temple flag, and two monks started an argument.

一云、幡動。一云、風動。

One said the flag moved, the other said the wind moved;  
往復曾未契理。

they argued back and forth but could not reach a conclusion.

祖云、不是風動、不是幡動、仁者心動。

The Sixth Ancestor<sup>i</sup> said, “It is not the wind that moves, it is not the flag that moves; it is your mind that moves.”

二僧悚然。

The two monks were awe-struck.

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、不是風動、不是幡動、不是心動、甚處見祖師。

It is not the wind that moves; it is not the flag that moves; it is not the mind that moves. How do you see the Ancestor?

若向者裏見得親切、方知二僧買鐵得金。

If you come to understand this matter deeply, you will see that the two monks got gold when buying iron.

祖師忍俊不禁、一場漏逗。

The Ancestor could not withhold his compassion and courted disgrace.

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<sup>i</sup> Dàjiāng Huìnéng (683-713) 大江慧能 [wg]: Ta-ching Hui-neng, [Kor]: Hyenüng, [Jap]: Enō a Dharm heir of Daman Hóngrěn

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

風幡心動

wind, flag, mind, moving,

一狀領過

all equally to blame.

只知開口

only knowing how to open his mouth,

不覺話墮

unaware of his fault in talking.

Seung Sahn’s Comment: Two monks do not have a problem. The sixth ancestor made a big mistake, because he once said, “originally nothing.” Where is mind? Wind and flag may control the two monks, but mind controls the sixth ancestor.

1. *Is the flag or the wind moving?*
2. *One monk was attached to the wind, another to the flag and the Sixth Chán Ancestor was attached to mind. How do you avoid these attachments?*
3. *If someone had said to the Sixth Ancestor, “your mind is also moving.” How could he have responded?*

## 三十 即心即佛

### Case 30. Mind is Buddha

馬祖、因大梅問、如何是佛。

Dàméi<sup>i</sup> asked Mǎzǔ<sup>ii</sup>, “What is the Buddha?”

祖云、即心是佛。

Mǎzǔ answered, “This very mind is the Buddha.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若能直下領略得去、著佛衣、喫佛飯、說佛

話、行佛行、即是佛也。

If you directly grasp Mǎzǔ’s meaning, you wear the Buddha’s clothes, eat the Buddha’s food, speak the Buddha’s words, do the Buddha’s deeds—that is, you are a Buddha himself.

然雖如是、大梅引多少人、錯認定盤星。

Alas, Dàméi misled not a few people into taking the mark on the balance for the weight itself.

爭知道說箇佛字、三日漱口。

How could he realize that even mentioning the word “Buddha” should make us rinse out our mouths for three days?

若是箇漢、見說即心是佛、掩耳便走。

If a man of understanding hears anyone say, “This very mind is the Buddha,” he will cover his ears and rush away.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

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<sup>i</sup> Dàméi Fācháng (752-839) [wg]: Ta-mei Fa-ch'ang

<sup>ii</sup> Mǎzǔ Dàoyī (709-788) 馬祖道一 [wg]: Ma-tsu Tao-i, [Kor]: Majo Toil, [Jap]: Baso Dōichi ; a Dharm heir of Nánnyuè Huáiràng

青天白日

the blue sky and bright day,

切忌尋覓

no more searching around!

更問如何

“what is the Buddha?” you ask:

抱贓叫屈

with loot in your pocket, you declare yourself innocent.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** If there is no Chán Master Mǎzǔ, no monk asking a question, no Buddha to transcend, and no mind to release, what do you perceive? Do you see the sky? Do you see the tree? Already you understand. Put it all down.

1. *What is Buddha?*
2. *What is mind?*
3. *Mind and Buddha, are they the same or different?*

## 三十一 趙州勘婆

### Case 31. Zhàozhōu Investigates an Old Woman

趙州、因僧問婆子、臺山路向甚處去。

A monk asked an old woman, “What is the way to Tái Shān<sup>i</sup>? ”

婆云、躉直去。

The old woman said, “Only go straight.”

僧纔行三五步。婆云、好箇師僧、又恁麼去。

When the monk had taken a few more steps, she said, “A good, respectable monk, but he too goes that way.”

後有僧舉似州。

Afterward someone told Zhàozhōu<sup>ii</sup> about this.

州云、待我去與你勘過這婆子。

Zhàozhōu said, “Wait a while and I will go and investigate the old woman for you.”

明日便去亦如是問。婆亦如是答。

The next day he went and asked the same question, and the old woman gave the same answer.

州歸謂衆曰、臺山婆子、我與勘破了也。

On returning, Zhàozhōu said to his disciples, “I have completely seen through the old woman of Tái Shān for you.”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

<sup>i</sup> Mount Tai (Chinese: 泰山; Tái Shān, [Kor] Dae San, [kusz]: Tae Sahn [Jap]: Tai Zan) is a mountain of historical and cultural significance located north of the city of Tai'an, in Shandong Province, China. The tallest peak is Jade Emperor Peak (simplified Chinese: 玉皇顶; traditional Chinese: 玉皇頂; [py]: Yùhuáng Dǐng), which is commonly reported as 1,545 meters (5,069 ft) tall, but is described by the Chinese government as 1,532.7 meters (5,028.5 ft). Mount Tai is one of the “Five Sacred Mountains”. It is associated with sunrise, birth, and renewal, and is often regarded the foremost of the five. The temples on its slopes have been a destination for pilgrims for three thousand years.

<sup>ii</sup> Zhàozhōu Cóngshěn (778-897) 趙州從諗 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts'ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [kusz]: Joju, [Jap]: Jōshū Jūshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn

無門曰、婆子只解坐籌帷幄、要且著賊不知。

The old woman only knew how to sit still in her tent and plan the campaign; she did not know when a spy shadowed her.

趙州老人、善用偷營劫寨乃機、又且無大人物。

Though old Zhàozhōu proved he was clever enough to take a camp and overwhelm a fortress, he displayed no trace of being a great commander.

檢點將來、二俱有過。

If we look at them, they both have their faults.

且道、那裏是趙州、勘破婆子處。

However, tell me, what did Zhàozhōu see in the old woman?

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

問既一般

the question was like the others,

答亦相似

the answer was the same.

飯裏有砂

sand in the rice,

泥中有刺

thorns in the mud.

**Seung Sahn's Commentary:** Zhàozhōu has eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, but he has no bone. How does he come down from Táishān and return to Tái Shān? The old woman has no eyes, no mouth, and no hands; how did she point the way to Tái Shān? This is very funny, ha, ha, ha, ha.

#### 1. Why did the old woman best the old monk?

2. When Zhàozhōu tested the old woman, did he have mind or not?
3. What does “I have completely seen through the old woman of Tái Shān for you” mean?

## 三十二 外道問佛

### Case 32. A Philosopher Questions the Buddha

世尊、因外道問、不問有言、不問無言。

A philosopher said to the Buddha, “I do not ask for words; I do not ask for silence.”

世尊據座。

The Buddha changed position to sit correctly.

外道贊歎云、世尊大慈大悲、開我迷雲令我得入。

The philosopher said admiringly, “The World-honored One, with his great mercy, has blown away the clouds of my illusion and enabled me to enter the Way.”

乃具禮而去。

In addition, after making bows, he took his leave.

阿難尋問佛、外道有何所證贊歎而去。

Then Ānanda asked the Buddha, “What did he realize, to admire you so much?”

世尊云、如世良馬見鞭影而行。

The World-honored One replied, “The best horse runs even at the shadow of the whip<sup>1</sup>. ”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、阿難乃佛弟子、宛不如外道見解、且道、外道與佛弟子相去多少。

Ānanda was the Buddha’s disciple, but his understanding was not equal to that of the philosopher. I want to ask you, what difference is there between the Buddha’s disciple and the philosopher?

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to a quote from the Samyuta Agama Sutra. The quote is: The best horse runs at the shadow of the whip. The good horse runs at the sound of the whip. The bad horse runs when it feels the whip touch its flesh. The worst kind of horse will only run when it feels the pain to the marrow of its bones.

頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

劍刃上行

on the edge of a sword,

氷綾上走

over the ridge of an iceberg,

不涉階梯

with no steps, no ladders,

懸崖撒手

climbing the cliffs without hands.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** The tree, the water, the ground and the sky have no speech, yet they teach us completeness. If you do not understand the way, the truth and correct life, you must ask the moon and the sun.

1. “*I do not ask for words; I do not ask for silence,” what can you do?*
2. “*The Buddha changed position to sit correctly,” what does this mean.*
3. *What did the philosopher attain?*
4. “*The best horse runs even at the shadow of the whip,” what does this mean?*

### 三十三 非心非佛

#### Case 33. Mǎzǔ’s “No Mind, No Buddha”

馬祖、因僧問、如何是佛。

A monk asked Mǎzǔ<sup>i</sup>, “What is the Buddha?”

祖曰、非心非佛。

Mǎzǔ answered, “No mind, no Buddha.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若向者裏見得、參學事畢。

If you understand this, you have finished studying Chán.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

路逢劍客須呈

present a sword if you meet a swordsman;

不遇詩人莫獻

do not offer a poem unless you meet a poet.

逢人且說三分

when talking, tell one-third of it;

未可全施一片

do not divulge the whole at once.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** The rocks do not care about Buddha or mind. The trees do not want truth or the correct way. They only do it. They embody it.

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<sup>i</sup> Mǎzǔ Dàoyī (709-788) 馬祖道一 [wg]: Ma-tsu Tao-i, [Kor]: Majo Toil, [kusz]: Ma Jo, [Jap]: Baso Dōichi ; a Dharma-heir of Nányuè Huáiràng

1. *What is Buddha?*
2. *Show me, “no mind, no Buddha.”*
3. *No mind, no Buddha, then what?*

## 三十四 智不是道

### Case 34. Nánquán’s “Conceptualization Is Not the Way”

南泉云、心不是佛、智不是道。

Nánquán<sup>i</sup> said, “Mind is not Buddha, conceptualization is not the Way.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、南泉可謂、老不識羞。

Nánquán, growing old, had no shame.

纔開臭口、家醜外揚。

Just opening his stinking mouth, he let slip the family secrets.

然雖如是、知恩者少。

Yet there are very few who are grateful for his kindness.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

天晴日頭出

the clouds clear, the sun shines brightly,

雨下地上濕

the rain comes, the earth gets wet.

盡情都說了

opening his heart and expounding the mystery,

只恐信不及

I fear he is little appreciated.

---

<sup>i</sup> Nánquán Pǔyuàn, (748-835) 南泉普願, [wg]: Nan-ch’üan P’u-yüan, [Kor]: Namchöñ, [kusz]: Nam Cheon, [Jap]: Nansen Fugan. Nánquán received transmission of the Dharma from Mǎzū Dàoyī. Nánquán gave transmission to seventeen of his students, and amongst them, Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn and Changsha Jingcen have the most recorded history.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** A cat understands cat's job, a dog understands dog's job, a chicken understands chicken's job. Human beings do not understand human being's job. What are you doing right now? Just do it.

1. *What is conceptualization?*

2. *What is path?*

## 三十五 倩女離魂

### Case 35. Qiàn's Soul Separated

五祖問僧云、倩女離魂、那箇是真底。

Wǔzǔ<sup>i</sup> said to his monks, “Qiàn’s<sup>ii</sup> soul separated from her being. Which was the real Qiàn?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若向者裏悟得真底、便知出殼入殼如宿旅舍。

When you realize what the real is, you will see that we pass from one husk to another like travelers stopping for a night’s lodging.

其或未然、切莫亂走。

However, if you do not realize it yet, I earnestly advise you not to rush about wildly.

轟然地水火風一散、如落湯螃蟹七手八脚。

When earth, water, fire, and air suddenly separate, you will be like a crab struggling in boiling water with its seven or eight arms and legs.

那時莫言、不道。

When that happens, do not say I did not warn you!

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

雲月是同

the moon above the clouds is ever the same;

溪山各異

valleys and mountains are separate from each other.

---

<sup>i</sup> Wǔzǔ [kusz]: Oh Jo

<sup>ii</sup> Qiàn [kusz]: Chong Nyo

萬福萬福

all are blessed, all are blessed;

是一是二

are they one or are they two?

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Anger, ignorance, desire, happiness and sadness, which one of these is the true mind? If you have no mind, where do they go? One appears, two disappears. Two appear, ten thousand things appear. One disappears, everything disappears.

1. *Qiān and her soul, are they the same or different?*
2. *Qiān and her soul are separated, which is the true one?*

## 三十六 路逢達道

### Case 36. When You Meet a Master on the Road

五祖曰、路逢達道人、不將語默對、且道、將甚麼對。

Wǔzǔ said, “When you meet a Master on the road, do not meet him with words or in silence. Tell me, how will you meet him?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若向者裏對得親切、不妨慶快。

In such a case, if you can manage an intimate meeting with him it will certainly be gratifying.

其或未然、也須一切處著眼。

However, if you cannot, you must be watchful in every way.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

路逢達道人

meeting a Master on the road,

不將語默對

meet him with neither words nor silence.

攔腮劈面拳

a punch on the jaw:

直下會便會

understand, if you can directly understand.

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** The tree understands the weather, the mountain understands the season. All animals understand their situation and their actions. Only human beings are stupid. In spring, the grass is green; in winter, the snow is white.

1. *What is a master's job?*

2. *How do you greet a master on the road?*

### 三十七 庭前柏樹

### Case 37. Cypress Tree in the Garden

趙州、因僧問、如何是祖師西來意。

A monk asked Zhàozhōu<sup>i</sup>, “What is the meaning of Bodhidharma’s<sup>ii</sup> coming to China?”

州云、庭前柏樹子。

Zhàozhōu said, “The cypress tree in the garden.”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若向趙州答處見得親切、前無釋迦後無彌勒。

If you understand Zhàozhōu’s answer intimately, there is no Śakyamuni before you, no Maitreya to come.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

言無展事

words cannot express the truth;

語不投機

speech does not convey the spirit.

承言者喪

swayed by words, you are lost;

滯句者迷

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<sup>i</sup> Zhàozhōu Cóngshèn (778-897) 趙州從諗 [wg]: Chao-chou Ts’ung-shen, [Kor]: Choju Chongsim, [kusz]: Joju, [Jap]: Jōshū Jūshin; a Dharma-heir of Nánquán Pǔyuàn

<sup>ii</sup> Bodhidharma (d: 536) 達磨 [py]: Dámó, [wg]: Ta-mo, [Kor]: Talma, [Jap]: Datsuma, he is considered Twenty-Eighth in the Indian Lineage from Śakyamuni, and the First Chinese Ancestor.

blocked by phrases, you are bewildered.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Hard training, this was a very difficult job for Bodhidharma. His “do it” opened many people’s eyes; however, he lost his body. Then three years after he died, he found his body and traveled to India. Where is he now; the pine tree is green and the sky is blue.

1. *Who is Bodhidharma?*
2. *Why did Bodhidharma come to China?*
3. *What does “the cypress tree in the front garden” mean?*
4. *If you were the monk and Zhàozhōu gave you this answer what could you have done?*

## 三十八 牛過窓櫺

### Case 38. A Buffalo Passes the Window

五祖曰、譬如水牯牛過窓櫺、頭角四蹄都過了、因甚麼  
尾巴過不得。

Wǔzǔ said, “A buffalo passes by the window. His head, horns, and four legs all go past. But why can’t the tail pass too?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若 向者裏顛倒、著得一隻眼、下得一轉語、  
可以上報四恩下資三有。

If you make a complete about-face, open your eye, and give a turning word on this point, you will be able to repay the four kinds of love that have favored you and help the sentient beings in the three realms that follow you.

其或未然、更須照顧尾巴始得。

If you are still unable to do this, return to this tail and reflect upon it, and then for the first time you will realize something.

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

過去墮抗塹

passing by, it falls into a ditch;

回來却被壞

coming back, all the worse, it is lost.

者些尾巴子

this tiny little tail,

直是甚奇怪

what a strange thing it is!

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** The water buffalo's tail killed all the Buddhas, killed all the teachers and killed all sentient beings. Where is the buffalo's tail? Do you see it? Are you holding it? It has already passed.

1. *Where is the water buffalo?*
2. *How did the water buffalo's head, horns and legs pass through?*
3. *Why can't the tail pass through?*

## 三十九 雲門話墮

### Case 39. A Mistake in Speaking

雲門、因僧問、光明寂照遍河沙。

A monk said to Yúnmén<sup>i</sup>, “The brilliance of the Buddha silently illuminates the whole universe. . .”

一句未絕、門遽曰、豈不是張拙秀才語。

However, before he could finish the verse, Yúnmén said, “Aren’t those the words of Zhang Zhou<sup>ii</sup> the Genius?”

僧云、是。

“Yes, they are,” answered the monk.

門云、話墮也。

“You have slipped up in your speaking,” Yúnmén said.

後來、死心拈云、且道、那裏是者僧話墮處。

Afterward, Sīxīn Chán Master<sup>iii</sup> brought up the matter and said, “Tell me; at what point did the monk make a mistake in his speaking?”

#### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若向者裏見得雲門用處孤危、者僧因甚話墮、

堪與人天爲師。

If you clearly understand this and realize how exacting Yúnmén was in his method, and what made the monk err in his speaking, you are qualified to be a teacher of heaven and earth.

若也未明、自救不了。

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<sup>i</sup> Yúnmén Wényān (1025-1115) 雲居道膺, [wg]: Yün-men Wen-yen, [Kor]: Unmün, [kusz]: Un Mun, [Jap]: Ummon Bun’en a Dharma-heir of Huánglóng Huìnan.

<sup>ii</sup> Zhang Zhou [kusz]: Chán Jul Su Jae

<sup>iii</sup> Sīxīn Chán Master [kusz]: Master Sa Shim

If you are not yet clear about it, you are far from saving yourself.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

急流垂釣

a line cast in the rapids,

貪餌者著

the greedy will be caught.

口縫纔開

before you start to open your mouth,

性命喪却

your life is already lost!

**Seung Sahn’s Comment:** The crow calls, “caw, caw.” The dog barks, “woof, woof.” Human beings open their mouths and many words appear. Big Mistake. Do you understand Yúnmén’s mistake? Go drink tea.

1. *“The brilliance of the Buddha silently illuminates the whole universe. . .” what does this mean?*
2. *Why did Yúnmén say, “You have slipped up in your speaking?”*
3. *Where is the place where this monk has slipped up in his speaking?*

## 四十 倒淨瓶

### Case 40. Kicking Over the Piss Pot

鴻山和尚、始在百丈會中充典座。

When Guīshān<sup>i</sup> Chán Master was with Báizhàng<sup>ii</sup>, he was kitchen master of the monastery.

百丈、將選大鴻主人。乃請同 首座對衆下語、出格者可往。

Báizhàng wanted to choose a master for Mount Dàwéi, so he called together all the monks and told them that anyone who could answer his question in an outstanding manner would be chosen.

百丈遂拈淨瓶、置地上設問云、不得喚作淨瓶、汝喚作甚麼。

Then he took a piss pot and stood it on the floor, and said, “You may not call this a piss pot. What do you call it?”

首座乃云、不可喚作木也。

The head monk said, “It cannot be called a stump.”

百丈却問於山。

Báizhàng asked Guīshān his opinion.

山乃倒淨瓶而去。

Guīshān tipped over the piss pot with his feet and went out.

百丈笑云、第一座 輸却山子也。

Báizhàng laughed and said, “The head monk loses.”

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<sup>i</sup> Guīshān Lingyu (1094-1164) 鴻山 [wg]: Wei-shan Ling-yu, [Kor]: Wisan, [kusz]: Wi Sahn, [Jap]: Isan Reiyu

<sup>ii</sup> Báizhàng Huái hái (720-814) 百丈懷海 [wg]: Pai-chang Huai-hai; [kusz]: Pai Chang, [Jap]: Hyakujō Eki was a Chinese Chán Master during the Tang Dynasty. He is a dharma heir of Mǎzǔ Dàoyī. Báizhàng's students included Huángbò and Línjì

因命之爲山。

In addition, Guīshān was named as the founder of the new monastery.

### Master Wúmén's Comment

無門曰、湧山一期之勇、爭奈跳百丈圈圓不出、撿點將來、便重不便輕。

Guīshān displayed Great Spirit in his action, but he could not cut himself free from Báizhàng's apron strings. He preferred the heavier task to lighter one.

何故。

Why was he like that, eh?

脫得盤頭、擔起鐵枷。

He took off his headband to bear the iron yoke.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

颶下笊籬并木杓

tossing bamboo baskets and ladles away,

當陽一突絕周遮

he made a glorious dash and swept all before him.

百丈重關欄不住

Báizhàng's barrier cannot stop his advance,

脚尖出佛如麻

thousands of Buddhas come forth from the tips of his toes.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Guīshān is not good and not bad. Too wild, he must keep a clear mind. Are his hands on vacation?

1. *This must not be called a piss pot, what do you call it?*
2. *Where is the head monk's mistake?*
3. *Why did Guīshān kick over the piss pot?*

## 四十一 達磨安心

### Case 41. Bodhidharma's Rest Mind

達磨面壁。

Bodhidharma<sup>i</sup> sat facing the wall.

二祖立雪。

The Second Ancestor<sup>ii</sup> stood in the snow.

斷臂云、弟子心未安、乞師安心。

He cut off his arm and presented it to Bodhidharma, crying, “My mind cannot be at rest! I beg you, master, please pacify my mind!”

磨云、將心來爲汝安。

“Bring your mind here and I will put it at rest,” replied Bodhidharma.

祖云、覓心了不可得。

“I have searched for my mind, and I cannot find it,” said the Second Ancestor.

磨云、爲汝安心竟。

“Now your mind is pacified,” said Bodhidharma.

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、齒老胡、十万里航海特特而來。

The broken-toothed old Barbarian came so importantly, thousands of miles over the sea.

可謂是無風起浪。

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<sup>i</sup> Bodhidharma (d: 536) 達磨 [py]: Dámó, [wg]: Ta-mo, [Kor]: Talma, [Jap]: Datsuma, he is considered Twenty-Eighth in the Indian Lineage from Śakyamuni, and the First Chinese Ancestor.

<sup>ii</sup> Dazu Huikě (487-593) 大祖慧可 [wg]: Hui-k'o; [Jap]: Taiso Eka) is considered the Second Patriarch of Chinese Chán and the twenty-ninth since Gautama Buddha.

This was raising waves where there was no wind.

末後接得一箇門人、又却六根不具。

In his last years he induced enlightenment in his disciple,  
who, to make matters worse, was defective in the six roots.  
謝三郎不識四字。

Why, Sānláng did not know for ideographs.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

西來直指

coming east, directly pointing,

事因囑起

you entrusted the Dharma, and trouble arose,

撓聒叢林

the clamor of the monasteries

元來是

is all because of you.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Very stupid Bodhidharma, why did he sit for nine years? Does he have a mind or not? If he has no mind, he has lost his life. What did the Second Ancestor achieve? If you understand this, go drink tea.

1. *Do you have a mind?*
2. *At that time, what was the Second Ancestor's unrest mind?*
3. *Where did the Second Ancestor's mind go?*
4. *What is rest mind?*

## 四十二 女子出定

### Case 42. A Woman Comes out of Samadhi

世尊、昔、因文殊、至諸佛集處值諸佛各還本處。

Once, in the old days, in the time of the World-honored One, Mañjuśrī<sup>i</sup> went to the assembly of the Buddhas and found that everyone had departed to his original dwelling place.

惟有一女人近彼佛坐入於三昧。

Only a woman remained, sitting in samadhi<sup>ii</sup> close to the Buddha's throne.

文殊乃白佛、云何女人得近佛坐而我不得。

Mañjuśrī asked Śakyamuni Buddha, “Why can the girl get near the Buddha's throne, while I cannot?”

佛告文殊、汝但覺此女、令從三昧起、汝自問之。

Śakyamuni Buddha said, “Bring her out of her samadhi and ask her yourself.”

文殊遶女人三、鳴指一下、乃托至梵天盡其神力而不能出。

Mañjuśrī walked around the girl three times, snapped his fingers once, took her to the Brahma heaven, and exerted all his miraculous powers to bring her out of her meditation, but in vain.

世尊云、假使百千文殊亦出此女人定不得。

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<sup>i</sup> Mañjuśrī [Skt]: मन्जुश्री, [py]: 文殊 Wénshū, [Kor]: Munsu, [Jap]: 文殊 Monju, is a bodhisattva associated with transcendent wisdom (Skt. prajñā) in Mahāyāna Buddhism. In Esoteric Buddhism he is also taken as a meditational deity. The Sanskrit name Mañjuśrī can be translated as Gentle Glory. Mañjuśrī is also known by the fuller Sanskrit name of Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta.

<sup>ii</sup> Samadhi (Sanskrit: समाधि) is a Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh technical term that usually denotes higher levels of concentrated meditation, or dhyana, in Yogic schools. In the Yoga tradition, it is the eighth and final limb identified in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

The World-honored One said, “Even a hundred thousand Mañjuśrī’s cannot make her wake up.

下方過一十二億河沙國土有罔明菩薩。

But down below, past twelve hundred million lands as innumerable as the sands of Ganges, there is the Bodhisattva of Delusive Wisdom.

能出此女人定。

He will be able to rouse her from her samadhi.”

須臾罔明大士、從地湧出禮拜世尊。世尊敕罔明。

Instantly the Bodhisattva of Delusive Wisdom emerged from the earth and made a bow to the World-honored One, who gave him his imperial order.

却至女人前鳴指一下。

The Bodhisattva went over to the woman and snapped his fingers once.

女人於是從定而出。

At this, she came out of her samadhi.

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、釋迦老子、做者一場雜劇、不通小小。

Old Śakyamuni put a petty drama on the stage and failed to enlighten the masses.

且道、文殊是七佛之師、因甚出 女人定不得。

I want to ask you, Mañjuśrī is the teacher of the Seven Buddhas; why couldn’t he arouse the woman from her samadhi.

罔明初地菩薩、爲甚却出得。

How was it that a Bodhisattva at the beginner’s stage could do it?

若向者裏見得親切、業識忙忙那伽大定。

If you understand this intimately, you will enjoy Nagya's grand samadhi in the busiest activity of consciousness.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

出得出不得

one was successful, the other was not;

渠儂得自由

both secured freedom of mind.

神頭并鬼面

one in a god-mask, the other in a devil-mask;

敗闕當風流

even in defeat, a beautiful performance.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Head cannot hold a pen, eyes cannot hear a sound, and mouth cannot see the sky. Men cannot have a baby. Hands have hand's job, legs have leg's job, and you must understand your correct job. When the rooster crows in the morning, the body gets up.

1. *What is deep samadhi?*
2. *Why was a very high-ranking Bodhisattva not able to wake the woman, while a low ranking one could?*
3. *After the woman came out of samadhi, what became clear?*

## 四十三 首山竹籠

### Case 43 Shōushān's Chán Stick

首山和尚、拈竹籠示衆云、汝等諸人、若喚作竹籠則觸。

Shōushān<sup>i</sup> Chán Master held up his Chán stick before his disciples and said, “You monks! If you call this a Chán stick, you oppose its reality.

不喚作竹籠則背。

If you do not call it a Chán stick, you ignore the fact.

汝諸人、且道、喚作甚麼。

Tell me, you monks, what will you call it?”

### Master Wúmén's Comment

無門曰、喚作竹籠則觸。

If you call it a walking stick, you oppose its reality.

不喚作竹籠則背。

If you do not call it a walking stick, you ignore the fact.

不得有語、不得無語。

Words are not available; silence is not available.

速道、速道。

Now, tell me quickly, what is it?

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

拈起竹籠

holding up the walking stick,

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<sup>i</sup> Shōushān Shèngniàn (926-993)首山省念, [kusz]: Su Sahn

行殺活令

he takes life, he gives life.

背觸交馳

opposing and ignoring interweave.

佛祖乞命

even Buddhas and Ancestors beg for their lives.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** Originally, there is no name and no form. When one mind appeared, name and form appeared. If you are attached to name and form, you cannot get out of hell. Attaining the correct function of name and form, you become Buddha.

1. *What do you call it?*
2. *Someone in the assembly answered correctly. If you were Shōushān what could you do?*

## 四十四 芭蕉拄杖

### Case 44. Bājiāo's Zen Stick

芭蕉和尚示衆云、你有拄杖子、我與你 拄杖子。

Bājiāo Chán Master said to his disciples, "If you have a Chán stick, I will give you a Chán stick.

你 無拄杖子、我奪你 拄杖子。

If you have no Chán Stick, I will take it from you."

### Master Wúmén's Comment

無門曰、扶過斷橋水、伴歸無月村。

It helps me wade across a river when the bridge is down. It accompanies me to the village on a moonless night.

若喚作拄杖、入地獄如箭。

If you call it a staff, you will enter hell like an arrow.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

諸方深與淺

the depths and shallows of the world

都在掌握中

are all in its grasp.

天拄地

it supports the heaven and sustains the earth.

隨處振宗風

everywhere, it enhances the doctrine.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** All animals understand their correct way and correct action. Only human beings remain ignorant. The rabbit likes carrots, the mouse likes cheese.

1. *How could you answer?*
2. *If you do not have a Chán Stick how can Shōushān take it from you?*

四十五 他是阿誰

### Case 45. “Who Is This?”

東山演師祖曰、釋迦彌勒猶是他奴。

Wǔzǔ of Dōngshān said, “Even Śakyamuni and Maitreya are servants of another.

且道、他是阿誰。

I want to ask you, who is he?”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、若也見得他分曉、譬如十字街頭撞見親爺相似、更不須問別人道是與不是。

If you can really see this “another” with perfect clarity, it is like encountering your own father at a crossroads. Why should you ask whether you recognize him or not?

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

他弓莫挽

do not draw another’s bow,

他馬莫騎

do not ride another’s horse,

他非莫辨

do not discuss another’s faults,

他事莫知

do not explore another’s affairs.

**Seung Sahn's Comment:** If you do not make anything, the whole universe is yours. If you make something, you are already dead. If you want to meet the Buddha, go to the kitchen. If you want to see Maitreya, go to the bathroom.

1. *Who is this?*

2. *Are Buddha's, Maitreya's and the other's job the same or different?*

#### 四十六 竿頭進步

#### Case 46. Proceed from the Top of the Pole

石霜和尚云、百尺竿頭、如何進步。

Shíshuāng Chán Master said, “When standing at the top of a hundred-foot pole one more step is necessary.”

又古德云、百尺竿頭坐底人、雖然得入未爲真。

Another eminent teacher of old said, “You, who sit on the top of a hundred-foot pole, although you have entered the Way you are not yet genuine.

百尺竿頭、須進步十方世界現全身。

Proceed from the top of the pole, and you will show your whole body in the ten directions.”

#### Master Wúmén's Comment

無門曰、進得步、翻得身、更嫌何處不稱尊。

If you go on further and turn your body about, no place is left where you are not the master.

然雖如是、且道、百尺竿頭、如何進步。嘆。

Even so, tell me, how will you go on further from the top of a hundred-foot pole? Eh?”

#### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

**瞎却頂門眼**

he dulls the third eye of insight

**錯認定盤星**

and clings to the first mark on the scale.

**拌身能捨命**

even though he may sacrifice his life,

**一盲引衆盲**

he is only a blind man leading the blind.

1. *When standing at the top of a hundred-foot pole one more step is necessary, what does this mean?*
2. *You, who sit on the top of a hundred-foot pole, although you have entered the Way you are not yet genuine, means what?*
3. *How can you show your body in the ten directions?*

## 四十七 兜率三關

### Case 47. Dōushuài's Three Barriers

兜率悅和尚、設三關問學者、

Dōushuài Chán Master set up three barriers for his disciples:  
撥草參玄只圖見性。

1. You leave no stone unturned to explore profundity, simply  
to see into your true nature.

即今上人性在甚處。

Now, I want to ask you, just at this moment, where is your  
true nature?

識得自性方脫生死。

2. If you realize your true nature, you are free from life and  
death.

眼光落時、作麼生脫。

Tell me, when your eyesight deserts you at the last moment,  
how can you be free from life and death?

脫得生死便知去處、四大分離向甚處去。

3. When you set yourself free from life and death, you should  
know your ultimate destination. So when the four elements  
separate, where will you go?

### Master Wúmén's Comment

無門曰、若能下得此三轉語、便可以隨處作主遇緣即  
宗。

If you can put turning words to these three questions, you are  
the master wherever you may stand and command Chán  
whatever circumstances you may be in.

其或未然、龜易飽、細嚼難飢。

If otherwise, listen: gulping down your meal will fill you easily, but chewing it well can sustain you.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén’s Verse

#### 一念普觀無量劫

this moment’s thoughts see through eternal time,

#### 無量劫事即如今

eternal time is just this moment.

#### 如今破箇一念

if you see through this moment’s thought,

#### 破如今底人

you see through the man who sees through this moment.

1. *You leave no stone unturned to explore profundity, simply to see into your true nature. Now, I want to ask you, just at this moment, where is your true nature?*
2. *If you realize your true nature, you are free from life and death. Tell me, when your eyesight deserts you at the last moment, how can you be free from life and death?*
3. *When you set yourself free from life and death, you should know your ultimate destination. So when the four elements separate, where will you go?*

## 四十八 乾峰一路

### Case 48. Gànfēng's One Road

乾峰和尚、因僧問、十方薄伽梵、一路涅槃門。

A monk asked Gànfēng Chán Master, “It is written, ‘Bhagavads in the ten directions and one straight road to Nirvana.’

未審路頭在甚麼處。

I still wonder where the road can be.”

峰拈起拄杖、劃一劃云、在者裏。

Gànfēng lifted his staff, drew a line, and said, “Here it is.”

後僧請益雲門。

Later the monks asked the same question to Yúnmén,

門拈起扇子云、扇子□跳上三十三天、築著帝釋鼻孔。

who held up his fan and said, “This fan jumps up to the thirty-third heaven and hits the nose of the deity Sakra Devanam Indra.

東海鯉魚、打一棒雨似盆傾。

When you strike the carp of the eastern sea, the rain comes down in torrents.”

### Master Wúmén’s Comment

無門曰、一人向深深海底行,□土揚塵、一人於高高山頂、

白浪滔天。

One, going to the bottom of the sea, lifts up clouds of dust; the other, on the top of the highest mountain, raises towering waves to wash the sky.

把定放行、各出一隻手扶堅宗乘。

One holding fast, the other letting go, each stretches out his hand to support the profound teaching.

大似兩箇馳子相撞著。

They are just like two riders starting from opposite ends of the course and meeting in the middle.

世上應無直底人。

However, none on earth can be absolutely direct.

正眼觀來二大老忽未識路頭在。

When examined with a true eye, neither of these two great masters knows the road.

### 頌曰 Master Wúmén's Verse

未舉步時先已到

before a step is taken, the goal is reached;

未動舌時先說了

before the tongue is moved, the speech is finished.

直饒著著在機先

though each move is ahead of the next,

更須知有向上竅

there is still a transcendent secret.

1. *Where is the one straight road to Nirvana?*

2. *Gànfēng lifted his staff and drew a line, what does this mean?*



## 後序

### Master Wúmén's Postscript

從上佛祖垂示機緣、據款結案、初無剩語。

The sayings and doings of the Buddha and the Ancestors have been set down in their original form.

揭翻腦蓋、露出眼睛。

Nothing superfluous has been added by the author, who has taken the lid off his head and exposed his eyeballs.

肯要諸人直下承當、不從佗覓。

Your direct realization is demanded; it should not be sought through others.

若是通方上土。纔聞舉著、便知落處。

If you are a man of realization, you will immediately grasp the point at the slightest mention of it.

了無門戶可入、亦無階級可升。

There is no gate for you to go through; there are no stairs for you to ascend.

掉臂度關不問關吏。

You pass the checkpoint, squaring your shoulders, without asking permission of the keeper.

豈不見玄沙道、無門解脫之門、無意道人之意。

Remember Master Xuánshā's way, "No-gate is the gate of emancipation; no-meaning is the meaning of the man of the Way."

又白雲道、明明知道只是者箇、爲甚麼透不過。

In addition, Báiyún says, "Clearly you know how to talk of it, but why can't you pass this simple, specific thing?"

恁麼說話、也是赤土搽牛糲。

However, all this kind of talk is like making a mud pie with milk and butter.

若透得無門關、早是鈍置無門。

If you have passed the Wúménguān, you can make a fool of Chán Master Wúmén.

若透不得無門關、亦之辜負自己。

If not, you are betraying yourself.

所謂、涅槃心易曉、差別智難明。

It is easy to know the Nirvana mind but difficult to attain the wisdom of differentiation.

明得差別智、家國自安寧。

When you have realized this wisdom, peace and order will reign over your land.

時紹定改元 解制前五日

The first year of Shàodìng [1228], five days before the end of the summer retreat.

楊岐八世孫 無門比丘慧開 謹識。

Respectfully inscribed by Wúmén Huíkāi Bhikṣu, eighth in succession from Yángqí Bāshì

無門關 卷終

Wúménguān End of the book

## **Paul Lynch, JDPSN**



Paul has been practicing Buddhist meditation for more than twenty-five years, and with the sanction and encouragement of Zen Master Sūngsan, founded the Huntington Beach Zen Center on August 14, 1993 where Zen Master Sūngsan installed him as Abbot of the Zen Center during the opening ceremony. The Huntington Beach Zen Center was originally a residential Zen Center where up to eight students lived and practiced. Paul faithfully served as the Abbot for fifteen years from 1993 until the summer of 2008. Over those years, the Zen Center moved from Huntington Beach to Stanton and later settled in Long Beach when it became a non-residential Center in 2000.

Throughout the late 1980's and into the early 1990's Paul had the opportunity to practice with Zen Master Sūngsan; and although his grand-teacher was retired from formal teaching at the time, the monks at Dharma Zen Center would frequently request him to host kōan interviews with the students during his frequent long stays in Los Angeles.

Paul Lynch, JDPSN received Inka from Zen Master Jibong of the Golden Wind Zen Order in April of 2006. Paul is no longer associated with the Golden Wind Order and has since founded the Five Mountain Sangha when he made the decision to enter into Zen studies with James Ford, Roshi of the Harada/Yasutani Lineage of Japanese Zen as transmitted through John Tarrant Roshi who was the first Dharma Heir of Robert Aitken Roshi. Besides having a practice location in Huntington Beach, California, he also has Zen Centers located in Berkeley, California, and Cincinnati, Ohio.

Paul has traveled extensively throughout the U.S., Europe and Asia sitting retreats with many of the Zen Masters both inside and outside of the Kwan Um School of Zen. Additionally, he is a Poet and Author, was encouraged by Zen Master Sūngsan to write poetry, and was counseled by his grand-teacher in the proper use and function of Zen Poetry in practice and teaching. Paul, JDPSN has written many books; including Cold Heart Thawing, a collection of his earlier poetry, Peering through the Cloud, a collection of his latter poetry, and A Path to Christ Consciousness was co-authored with his long time Dharma friend Robert Harwood. Pōpsanim has also written Five Mountains—a Practice Guide to Sōn Buddhism, Zen Liturgy—Korean Sōn Practice Forms, and Buddhist Precepts—a Guide for Western Buddhist Lay Practitioners along with Translations of The Barrier That Has No Gate, Wú Mén Guān and The Blue Cliff Record. These books are available from the Zen Center, at Before Thought Publications or any of your local booksellers

## **Appendix —: Dharma Lineage**

### **Five Mountain Order**

### **金風禪宗**

#### **Indian Ancestors**

Śākyamuni Buddha	563-483 BCE	शाक्यमुनि
1. Mahākāśyapa	Unknown	महाकाश्यप
2. Ānanda	6th BCE	आनन्द
3. Śaṇavāsa	Unknown	शाणवासिक
4. Upagupta	Unknown	उपगुप्त
5. Dhītika	Unknown	धीतिक
6. Miccaka	Unknown	मिच्छक
7. Vasumitra	Unknown	वसुमित्र
8. Buddhanandi	Unknown	बुद्धनन्द
9. Buddhamitra	Unknown	बुद्धमित्र
10. Pārvvā	Unknown	पार्श्व
11. Punyayasás	Unknown	पुण्ययशस्
12. Asvaghosa	1st-2nd BCE	अश्वघोष
13. Kapimala	Unknown	कपिमल
14. Nāgārjuna	150-250 BCE	नागार्जुन
15. Kānadeva	Unknown	काणदेव
16. Rāhulata	Unknown	राहुलभद्र
17. Sanghanandi	d. 74 BCE	संघनन्द
18. Gayasata	Unknown	गेयाशत
19. Kumārata	Unknown	कुमारलव्य
20. Jayata	Unknown	गयत
21. Vasubandhu	Unknown	वसुबन्धु
22. Manorhita	Unknown	मनुर
23. Haklena	Unknown	हकुलेनयसस्
24. Āryasimha	Unknown	सिंह
25. Vaśasuta	Unknown	वशसुत
26. Punyamitra	Unknown	पुण्यमित्र
27. Prajñātāra	Unknown	प्रज्ञातर
28. Bodhidharma	470 – 536	बोधिधर्म

## Chinese Ancestors

29. Dàzǔ Huìkě	487 – 592	大祖慧可
30. Jiāngxi Sēngcàn	d. 606	江西僧璨
31. Dàiyì Dàoxìn	580 – 651	大義道信
32. Dàomén Hóngrěn	602 – 675	道門弘忍
33. Dàijiāng Huìnéng	683 – 713	大江慧能
34. Nányuè Huáiràng	677 – 744	南躍懷讓
35. Mǎzǔ Dàoyī	709 – 788	馬祖道一
36. Báizhàng Huáiihái	720 – 814	百丈懷海
37. Huángbò Xīyùn	720 – 850	黃蘖希運
38. Línjì Yíxuán	d. 867	臨濟義玄
39. Xiāngyán Zhixián	830 – 888	興化存獎
40. Nányuàn Huiyóng	860 – 930	南院慧顥
41. Fēngxuè Yánzhǎo	896 – 973	風穴延沼
42. Shǒushān Shèngniān	926 – 993	首山省念
43. Fényáng Shànzhāo	947–1024	汾陽善昭
44. Shíshuāng Chuyuán	987–1040	石霜楚圓
45. Yángqí Fānghuì	993–1046	楊岐方會
46. Báiyun Shǒuduān	1025–1072	白雲守端
47. Wǔzǔ Fǎyǎn	d. 1104	五祖法演
48. Yuánwù Kèqín	1063–1135	圜悟克勤
49. Xīqīān Shǎolóng	1077–1136	虛岐少隆
50. Yīngān Tánhuá	1103–1163	應庵曇華
51. Miān Xiánjié	1118–1186	密庵咸傑
52. Pòān Zǔxiān	1136–1211	破庵祖先
53. Wúzhǔn Shīfàn	1177–1249	無準師範
54. Xuehyen Huilang	Unknown	
55. Qian Congshia	Unknown	

56. Shíwū Qīnggǒng	1270-1352	石屋清珙
<b>Korean Ancestors</b>		
57. Tae'gō Bowu	1301-1382	太古财宇宙
58. Wanbang Honggo	1320-1392	完房洪高
59. Guīgog Jeongun	Unknown	龜谷正云
60. Pyoggye Jōngshim	d. 1492	
61. Byeogsong Jiyán	1464-1534	碧松智嚴
62. Buyong Língguān	1485-1571	芙蓉靈觀
63. Cheongxū Hyujing	1520-1604	清虛休靜
64. P'yonyang Eongwe	1581-1644	彥機
65. Fēngdam Yichén	1592-1665	楓潭義謙
66. Woldam Seoljì	1632-1704	月潭雪霽
67. Huànseong Jian	1664-1729	喚醒
68. Hōam Chejōng	Unknown	
69. Cheonbong Taeheul	1710-1793	千峯泰屹
70. Yulbong Chōngwa	Unknown	
71. Keumhō Bōpchōm	Unknown	
72. Yǒngam Heeong	Unknown	
73. Yeongeul Dǐngyu	Unknown	永乙頂惟
74. Manhwa Bosōn	Unknown	
75. Kyōnghō Sōng'u	1849-1912	鏡虛惺牛
76. Maígōng Wōlmyōn	1871-1946	滿空月面
77. Kōbong Gyeōngk	1890-1961	
78. Súngsan Hāngwon	1927-2004	崇山行願

#### American Ancestors

79. Jibong Haeūm	1941-Present	智頂洋音
80. Dochong Pōpsa	1957-Present	道清禪師



## Kōan Bibliography

The Barrier That Has No Gate (Wúmén Guān, 無門關)

Chán Master Wúmén Huìkāi 無門慧開 (1183-1260)

### **The Gateless Barrier – the Wu Men Kuan**

Translated with commentaries by Robert Aitken Roshi

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### **No Barrier—**

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### **Gateless Gate:**

### **The Classic Book of Zen Koans**

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### **Zen Comments on the Mumonkan**

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Guāng lù, [wg]: Ching-te Ch'uan-teng Lu, [Jap]: Keitoku Dentōroku  
written by Keizan Jōkin Zenji 莹山绍瑾(1268-1325) Yíngshān Shàojīn

## **Suggested Reading List**

### **Introductory Study**

#### **An Introduction to Zen Buddhism**

By Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki  
Publisher: Grove/Atlantic;  
Reissue edition November, 1991  
ISBN: 0-8021-3055-0

#### **Zen in the Art of Archery**

By Eugen Herrigel and Daisetz T. Suzuki  
Publisher: Vintage  
ISBN: 0-3757-0509-0

#### **Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind**

By Shunryu Suzuki Roshi  
Publisher: Weatherhill  
ISBN: 0-8348-0079-9

#### **Dropping Ashes on the Buddha – The Teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn**

Edited by Stephen Mitchell  
Publisher: Grove Press  
ISBN: 0-8021-3052-6

#### **Nothing Special – Living Zen**

By Charlotte Joko Beck & Steve Smith  
Publisher: Harpers San Francisco  
ISBN: 0-0625-1117-3

#### **The Compass of Zen Teaching (Original Abbreviated Version)**

By Zen Master Sungsan  
Publisher: Before Thought Publications

#### **Zen Flesh, Zen Bones**

Compiled and translated by Paul Reps et al.  
Publisher: Tuttle  
ISBN: 0-8048-3186-6

## **Advanced Study**

### **Compass of Zen**

By Zen Master Seung Sahn

Publisher: Shambhala Dragon Editions

ISBN: 1-5706-2329-5

## **Contemporary Book on Buddhism**

### **Only Don't Know**

By Zen Master Seung Sahn

Publisher: Shambhala Dragon Editions

ISBN: 1-5706-2432-1

### **The Mind of Clover –**

### **Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics**

By Robert Aitken Roshi

Publisher: North Point Press

ISBN: 0-8654-7158-4

### **Open Mouth, Already a Mistake**

By Zen Master Wu Kwang, Richard Shrobe

Publisher: Primary Point Press

ISBN: 0-9427-9508-3

*Currently out of print.*

### **The Roaring Stream—**

### **A New Zen Reader**

Edited by Nelson Foster and Jack Shoemaker

Publisher: Ecco,

ISBN: 0-8800-1511-X

### **Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism**

By Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche

Publisher: Shambhala

ISBN: 0-8777-3050-4

## **Women's Buddhist Study**

### **Meetings with Remarkable Women:**

### **Buddhist Teachers in America**

By Lenore Friedman

Publisher: Shambhala

ISBN: 1-57062-474-7

**Buddhist Women on the Edge:**  
**Contemporary Perspectives from the Western Frontier**  
By Marianne Dresser  
Publisher: North Atlantic Books  
ISBN: 1-55643-203-8

**Turning the Wheel:**  
**American Women Creating the New Buddhism**  
By Sandy Boucher  
Publisher: Beacon Press  
ISBN: 0-80707-305-9

**No Time to Lose:**  
**A Timely Guide to the Way of the Bodhisattva**  
By Pema Chodron  
Publisher: Shambhala  
ISBN: 1-59030-135-8

**When Things Fall Apart:**  
**Heart Advice for Difficult Times**  
By Pema Chodron  
Publisher: Shambhala  
ISBN: 1-57062-344-9

**The Places that Scare You:**  
**A Guide to Fearlessness in Difficult Times**  
By Pema Chodron  
Publisher: Shambhala  
ISBN: 1-57062-921-8

**The Wisdom of No Escape:**  
**And the Path of Loving Kindness**  
By Pema Chodron  
Publisher: Shambhala  
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**Start Where You Are:**  
**A Guide to Compassionate Living**  
By Pema Chodron  
Publisher: Shambhala  
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## **Chinese Chán Buddhism**

### **Transmission of the Mind Outside the Teachings**

By Charles Luk

Publisher: Grove Press

### **The Original Teachings of Ch’ān Buddhism**

Compiled and translated by Chang Chung-yuan

Publisher: Pantheon Books,

ISBN: 0-6797-5824-0

### **Ch’ān and Zen Teaching – Volumes 1, 2 & 3**

By Lu K’uan Yu, Charles Luk

Publisher: Weiser

ISBN: 0-8772-8795-3 Vol. 1,

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### **The Story of Chinese Zen By Nan Huai-Chin**

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Publisher: Tuttle

ISBN: 0-8048-3050-9

### **The Golden Age of Zen**

by John Ching-Hsiung Wu

Publisher: Image Books,

ISBN: 0-3854-7993-X

### **Sayings and Doings of Pai Chang**

Translated by Thomas Cleary

Center Publications, ISBN: 0-9168-2010-6

*Currently out of print.*

### **The Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma**

Translated by Red Pine

Publisher: North Point Press

ISBN: 0-8654-7399-4

### **The Zen Teaching of Huang Po**

Translated by John Blofeld

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### **Swampland Flowers—**

### **Letters and Lectures of Zen Master Ta Hui**

Translated by Christopher Cleary

Publisher: Grove Press

ISBN: 0-3941-7011-3

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## **Korean Sōn Buddhism**

### **Only Doing It for Sixty Years**

Publisher: Primary Point Press

*Currently out of print.*

### **Thousand Peaks—Korean Zen Traditions and Teachers**

By Mu Soeng

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ISBN: 0-9427-9502-4

### **The Way of Korean Zen**

By Zen Master Kusan

Publisher: Weatherhill

ISBN: 0-8348-0201-5

*Currently out of print.*

### **Nine Mountains**

By Zen Master Kusan

Publisher: International Meditation Center, Korea; 1978

*Currently out of print.*

### **The Zen Monastic Experience**

By Robert Buswell, Jr.

Publisher: Princeton University Press,

ISBN: 0-6910-3477-X

### **Tracing Back the Radiance – Chinul’s Korean Way of Zen**

By Robert E. Buswell

Publisher: University of Hawaii Press

ISBN: 0-8248-1427-4

### **The Korean Approach to Zen – The Collected Works of Chinul**

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## **Japanese Zen Buddhism**

### **Shobogenzo– Zen Essays by Dogen**

Translated by Thomas Cleary

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### **The Zen Master Hakuin–Selected Writings**

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### **Bankei Zen–Translations from the Record of Bankei**

Translated by Peter Haskel

Publisher: Grove Press

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## **Kōan Study**

### **Wúménguan–Chinese; No Gate Checkpoint–English**

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### **Zen: The Perfect Companion**

#### **(Perfect Companions!)**

by Seung Sahn

Publisher: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers

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## **Various Koan Collections**

### **The Zen Koan as a Means of Attaining Enlightenment**

By Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki  
Publisher: Tuttle Publishing  
ISBN: 0-80483-041-X

### **The Sound of the One Hand– 281 Zen Koans with Answers**

By Hau, Yoel Hoffmann  
Publisher: Basic Books  
ISBN: 0-46508-079-0

### **Opening a Mountain– Koans of the Zen Masters**

By Steven Heine  
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By John Daido Loori, Kazuaki Tanahashi (Translator)  
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## **Sutras for Chan Study**

### **The Flower Ornament Scripture– A Translation of the Avatamsaka Sutra**

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Publisher: Shambhala  
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### **The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch**

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ISBN: 1-5824-3256-2

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**The Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti– A Mahayana Scripture**

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Publisher: Pennsylvania State University Press

ISBN: 0-2710-0601-3

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**Bone of Space**

By Zen Master Seung Sahn

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ISBN: 0-9427-9506-7

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<sup>i</sup> **Recorded Sayings of Zen Master Joshu** (Paperback) by James Green (Translator,) Paperback: 208 pages, Publisher: Shambhala (September 18, 2001,) Language: English, ISBN: 157062870X

<sup>ii</sup> **The Compass of Zen** (Shambhala Dragon Editions) (Paperback) by Seung Sahn, Paperback: 416 pages, Publisher: Shambhala; 1st ed edition (October 28, 1997,) Language: English, ISBN: 1570623295

<sup>iii</sup> **The Book of Serenity: One Hundred Zen Dialogues** (Paperback) by Thomas Cleary, Paperback: 512 pages, Publisher: Shambhala; Reprint edition (March 22, 2005), Language: English, ISBN: 1590302494

<sup>iv</sup> **Kwan Um School of Zen:** The Kwan Um School of Zen is an international organization of more than a hundred centers and groups founded by Zen Master Seung Sahn, among the first wave of Korean Zen Masters to live and teach in the West. The School's purpose is to make this practice of Zen Buddhism available to an ever-growing number of students throughout the world. The heart of the Kwan Um School of Zen is the daily practice, which goes on in its Zen centers and groups. Students and visitors eat together, work together, and meditate together – gradually attaining a clear compassionate mind, which moment to moment is able to help all beings. They offer training in Zen meditation through meditation instruction, daily morning and evening practice, public talks, teaching interviews, sittings, retreats and workshops. Their programs are open to anyone regardless of previous experience and are often offered at no cost.

<sup>v</sup> **Süngsan sōnsa** (1927-2004) (KUSZ: Seung Sahn Soen-sa) was a Korean Zen master born in Seun Choen, North Korea. In 1973 he founded the Kwan Um School of Zen in Providence, Rhode Island. Zen Master Süngsan died in at Hwage'sa in Seoul, South Korea. Some of his Zen teachings were recorded in several books, including The Compass of Zen, Only Don't Know: Selected Teaching Letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn, and Dropping Ashes on the Buddha which was his first book actually was the labor of Stephen Mitchell, an early student of Zen Master Süngsan. Zen Master Süngsan also bestowed the title of Taesönsa-nim (KUSZ: Dae Soen Sa Nim) upon himself as a celebration for his sixtieth birthday, which mean 'Great Honored Zen Master.'

<sup>vi</sup> **Wade-Giles** (Simplified Chinese: 威妥瑪拼音 or 韦氏拼音), sometimes abbreviated Wade, is a Romanization system (phonetic notation and transliteration) for the Chinese language based on the form of Mandarin used in Beijing. It developed from a system produced by Thomas Wade in the mid-19th century, and reached settled form with Herbert Giles's Chinese-English dictionary of 1892. Wade-Giles was the main system of transliteration in the English-speaking world for most of the 20th century, replacing the Nanjing-based romanization systems that had been common until late in the 19th century. It has mostly been replaced by the pinyin system today, but remains in use in the Republic of China (Taiwan).

<sup>vii</sup> **Pinyin** is a system of romanization (phonemic notation and transcription to Roman script) for Standard Mandarin, where pin means "spell" and yin means "sound". The most common variant of pinyin in use is called Hanyu Pinyin (Simplified Chinese: 汉语拼音方案; Traditional Chinese: 漢語拼音方案; pinyin: Hán yǔ Pīnyīn fāng'àn), also known as scheme

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of the Chinese phonetic alphabet ((Simplified Chinese: 汉语拼音; Traditional Chinese: 漢語拼音; pinyin: Hànyǔ Pīnyīn).

<sup>viii</sup> McCune-Reischauer is a romanization system of the Korean language, created in 1937 by two Americans: George M. McCune and Edwin O. Reischauer. It does not attempt to transliterate Hangul but rather to represent the phonetic pronunciation. North Korea and many Western countries use this system while South Korea replaced it with a new romanization system that was created by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Revised Romanization of Korean. A third system—the Yale romanization system, which is a one-to-one transliteration system—exists, but is only used in academic literature, especially in linguistics. During the period of Russian interest in Korea at the beginning of the 20th century, attempts were also made at representing Korean in Cyrillic. The McCune-Reischauer system is basically friendly to Westerners.

<sup>9</sup> Hakuin Ekaku (白隱 慧鶴, 1686 – 1769 or 1685 – 1768) was one of the most influential figures in Japanese Zen Buddhism. He revived the Rinzai School from a moribund period of stagnation, refocusing it on its traditionally rigorous training methods integrating meditation and kōan practice. Hakuin's influence was such that all Rinzai Zen masters today trace their lineage through him, and all modern practitioners of Rinzai Zen use practices directly derived from his teachings.